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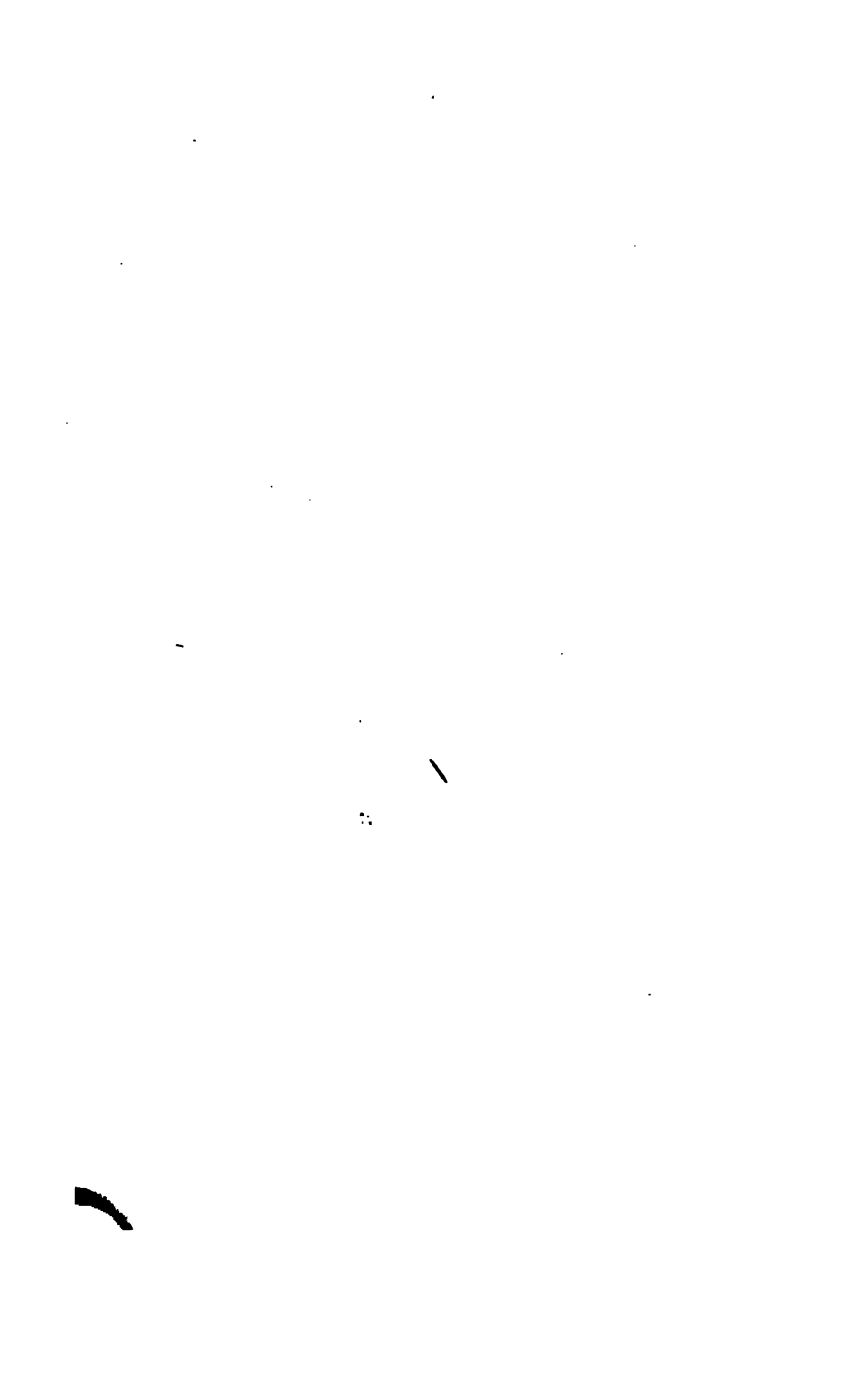
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To my son Wm. D. J.  
I do hope that he  
may read with care  
the valuable quotations  
made herein.

Wm. D. J.  
4/14. 1877



INDICES,  
HISTORICAL AND RATIONAL,  
TO  
A REVISION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

BY  
DAVID NEWPORT,  
A MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

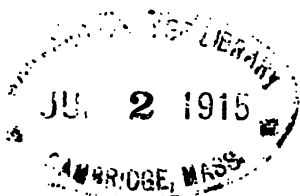
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"Belief is no virtue. All our happiness in time and eternity depends on inward knowledge and right information, which we have received from our Heavenly Father."—ELIAS HICKS.

"A new translation of the Bible must be left to science."—JOHN JACKSON.

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## DEDICATION

TO THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

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I THUS dedicate this book for the reason that the Society of Friends have for two centuries been ever foremost in every good word and work. We are called a peculiar people,—may we ever remain such, exhibiting to the world the fruits of practical righteousness,—manifesting, as the Fathers did, a willingness to be made the instruments in His hand in breaking the bonds of spiritual oppression that is now as a millstone around the necks of the people. The command to-day is: “Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over!” And we will find “that it is more blessed to give than to receive.” The world has indeed been “fed fat with error.” But it has been our mission through evil and through good report to bear aloft the banner of the right and the true. “The rise of the people

called Quakers," says Bancroft, "is one of the memorable events in the history of man. It marks the moment when intellectual freedom was claimed unconditionally by the people as an inalienable birthright. To the masses in that age, all reflection on politics and morals presented itself under a theological form. The Quaker doctrine is philosophy summoned from the cloister, the college, and the saloon, and planted among the most despised of the people. As poetry is older than critics, so philosophy is older than metaphysicians. The mysterious question of the purpose of our being is always before us and within us; and the little child, as it begins to prattle, makes inquiries which the pride of learning cannot solve. The method of solution adopted by the Quakers was the natural consequence of the origin of their sect. The Quaker has but one word—THE INNER LIGHT, the voice of God in the soul. That light is a reality, and, therefore, in its freedom the highest revelation of truth; it is kindred with the spirit of God, and, therefore, merits dominion as the guide to virtue. Intellectual freedom, the supremacy of mind, universal enfranchisement,—these three points include the whole of Quakerism, as far as it belongs to civil history." (History of the United States, vol. ii. p 337.)

This INNER LIGHT as a pillar of cloud by day led

our Fathers to protest, *and war against*, the numberless evils of their day, prominent among which were priestcraft, extravagance, war, slavery, and intemperance. The voice of the highest, who teaches as never man can teach, led them to announce to an astonished world that grand idea, that God is the teacher of his people himself. And as we believe him to have been without shadow of change, it logically follows that he has not veiled his countenance from his children in any age of the world, but that his teachings have been continuous and without intermission; that the manna which was gathered yesterday may not be the proper aliment for to-day. This was illustrated in the manner in which they treated the question of woman's teaching. Paul, as we have the account, said, "I suffer not a woman to teach." But George Fox did not go back sixteen hundred years to learn the capacity and the duty of woman as a teacher in the day in which he lived. And the absurdity of this mode of determining this question does not seem apparent even *at the present time*, for, with but a few small exceptions, we are the only society in the Christian family who are not in a state of blindness and darkness in this particular. Those who usurp the prerogative of teacher are "but as blind leaders of blind." And it may be safely concluded that they will oppose any

attempt that looks like taking away their craft; that they will continue as the priests at the shrine of *Æsculapius* to espouse the idea, "the common people like to be deceived, deceived let them be!"

It is for the purpose of contributing, a mite though it be, in breaking down this monstrous mass of superstition, that has induced the writer of this essay in this present undertaking. He will not attempt to say anything strange, or to clothe his thoughts in other than the plainest language, considering the greatest homage that we can evince for the cause of truth is to show our faith in her leadings. This was evinced by the life, conduct, and testimony of that great and good man, *Elias Hicks*.

Neither are the thoughts of the writer in a crude or undigested condition, for he has observed more than the *Pythagorean* term of silence. And his mind has been impregnated with the great thought that the *SUPREME* is ever present with his children, and that his instructions are continuous,—as the sun is a new revelation to each morning, so does the sun of his righteousness disseminate the revelations of his love and his perfect wisdom to all his children every day of their lives.

But it may be asked, Is there not great danger of overthrowing past illusions? I answer that the danger

is far greater that these illusions may overthrow in men's minds the truths that the past has elucidated. For we must learn to look upon all things as valuable only so far as they contain truth. And to receive nothing as authority only so far as it *illustrates* her teachings to our minds !

For God's truths are true at all times and ages, and under all circumstances. They are in harmony with himself and with the laws by which he governs the universe of mind and matter.

Therefore when men present something as truth, no matter how venerable with age, or sacred by tradition, believe it not when it violates his external and internal law. "Let God be true, and every man a liar."

As a recent writer of our Society has expressed : "We have nothing to fear (from the spirit of the age) for *our* God. Dogmatists have, for theirs is an artificial Deity, *composed of definitions*. OUR GOD is the ETERNAL, INFINITE, and ABSOLUTE, THE CAUSE of all causes, the source of life and being !"

DAVID NEWPORT.

ABINGTON, 3 mo. 25, 1871.



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# INDICES,

## HISTORICAL AND RATIONAL.

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### CHAPTER I.

Science and the Age—The Church and Agassiz—Elias Hicks and the Society of Friends.

SCIENCE is enlarging the sphere of thought; investigation is probing the mighty problem of nature; and a conflict and antagonism are thought to be discerned between the works of the Creator in the volume that is spread out before us, in that mighty universe of mind and material which philosophy has brought to view, and those things which are considered sacred by age and venerable by antiquity and tradition.

An irreconcilable variance between Science and the Scriptures is thought to exist. The expounders of the latter have unhesitatingly, not only in the past, but also in the present age, denounced and persecuted such minds as Galileo, Bruno, and Humboldt. The first was forced to abjure his principles in the chambers of the Inquisition; the second was burned at the stake; and the last-mentioned, though he has done more than any man who ever lived in demon-

strating the works of creative wisdom, is not only denounced as a heretic, but is also unjustly suspected as having held atheistical principles by many popular theologians.

And notwithstanding that for six generations the lineal ancestors of the large-minded Agassiz were clergymen, and that he has done so much in combating and utterly overthrowing the theory that connected man *in the chain* of created things, by demonstrating "that he is not only the highest group in creation, but the last intended type," yet he is considered an infidel and an unbeliever, because he openly says that the account in Genesis of the creation cannot in any possible way be reconciled with the established truths of Science.

Thus a seemingly uncompromisable conflict is being waged throughout the civilized world upon an all-important subject, and it is not to be wondered at that the spirit of free thought and religious independence has led, in some instances, to an entire skepticism of revealed truth, and has impelled some few also to boldly set aside not only those things which for ages have been held by many as the word of God, but also has caused a denial of any revelation except that which the intellect takes cognizance of in the material world.

And here we see danger is to be apprehended from this source, for mere intellectual greatness is not inseparable from moral and spiritual poverty and degradation! And the question is a most pertinent one, whether those who consider themselves as the especial exponents of theological truth are not chargeable with

much and many of the errors of the day by insisting upon a false standard and criterion for religious opinion.

The age is eminently an age of rational investigation and inquiry, not only into the truths of science, but also into the truths of Scripture; and there is no means by which this research can be stayed. The days of the Inquisition are over! But still those who call themselves ministers of the gospel are in this era of light and knowledge expounding the Scriptures in the same irrational mode that was customary three hundred years ago, just as though no advancement had taken place in the civilized world.

A revelation from God must be adapted to the rational, moral, and spiritual nature of man. The Society of Friends have ever held that all true revelation is so adapted, and that it does not contradict, but that it is in accordance with, the word that God has written on the human heart, and that it is consistent with his providence and his works

It has ever been a leading tenet of the Society that no final revelation can be made to one generation for all subsequent generations, from the very nature of God's dispensations, and from the very nature of man's requirements; and hence it has been held that the Scriptures are of no more authority than they themselves assert. And Robert Barclay, a distinguished scholar, has rendered the text,\* "*All scripture given by inspiration is,*" etc., which is different from the

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\* 2 Tim. iii. 16.—Apology, p. 86.

common version. And in his "Apology" he relates the following incidents :

"I have known some of my friends who possess the same faith with me, faithful servants of the Most High God, and full of divine knowledge of His truth, *as it was immediately and inwardly revealed to them by the Spirit*, and from a true and living experience, who not only were ignorant of the Greek or Hebrew, but even some could not read their own vulgar language, who being pressed by their adversaries with some citations out of the English translation, and finding them to disagree with the manifestations of truth in their own hearts, have boldly affirmed the Spirit of God never said so."

On this account, he says, he "seriously examined and found them to be errors and corruptions of the translators, who, as in most translations, do not give us the genuine signification of the words, as they strain them to express that which comes nearest to that opinion or notion they have of the truth."

He also says :

"Which how uncertain it is, for a man to build his faith upon the many corrections, amendments, and various essays, which even among Protestants have been used, whereupon the latter have constantly blamed the former as guilty of defects and errors, doth sufficiently declare, and that even the last translations in the vulgar languages need to be corrected."

This is the opinion of this eminent father of our Society near two centuries ago. He further illustrates the great difficulty and the disagreement among learned

men in the interpretation of the Hebrew. Upon this subject, that distinguished minister of the Society, John Jackson, in his "Dissertation on the Christian Ministry," refers to that illustrious Hebrew scholar, Dr. Kennicott, who protested against the corruptions of the text of the common translation. His earnestness and reputation were so great, that in the year 1770 £10,000 was raised to defray the cost of collating the existing MSS. Many years of labor did this great man give in the attempt that a revision of the Scriptures should be undertaken,—*demonstrating the fallacies* which King James's translators "had spread over the land" in consequence of their ignorance of the Hebrew; but his efforts were all in vain. The fear expressed by Dr. Vicesimus Knox finally prevailed. He says, "*I am convinced that nothing would tend more to shake the basis of the ESTABLISHMENT.*" Thus were the capacity and honesty of Dr. Kennicott answered. The truth which he had demonstrated was as a mere nothing compared with the possible injury that might accrue to the Church of England.

To exhibit the character of the Hebrew, I will subjoin a few illustrations from Dr. Parkhurst's Lexicon. He was a divine of the Church of England.

נֶפֶשׁ, signifies "a living creature, the spiritual part of man, the soul, also the animal frame, including the blood," etc., etc. Gen. xxxv. 17; Gen. xxxii. 30; Gen. ix. 5; Job vi. 7; Prov. xiii. 4; Prov. xxiii. 2; Prov. xxviii. 25; Deut. xii. 15, 20, 21; Eccles. vi. 9; Isa. lvi. 11. (p. 460.) This term has application to doctrinal points which has caused much controversy in the

church. 1 John i. 7. Elias Hicks said this text should read, the spiritual *life* in Jesus.

ראה, "fear, reverence, respect, and piety to God." (p. 292.) Jer. ii. 19; Job iv. 6, xv. 4; Lev. xix. 3.

רנ, "to direct, rule, judge." ארנ, "judge, lord, sir, master," *i.e.* a person of authority. (p. 141.) Ps. lxxx. 7; 1 Sam. xxiv. 16; 2 Sam. xix. 9 or 10.

ררה, "the Holy Spirit, or Spirit of God, whose agency in the spiritual world, in the Scriptures, is represented to us by that of the air in the natural," *i.e.* breathing, inspiration. (p. 680.) Gen. ii. 7. Or the term might have been rendered "the breath of God." Job xxxii. 8.

On page 71 he renders from the same word בניהאלפים, "Sons of God, men begotten again or formed by his word, resembling their Heavenly Father in their dispositions or actions, or the sons of the prophets." Kings xiii. 11; compare with Gen. vi. 2, 4; Dent. xiv. 1, xxxii. 19; Isa. i. 2. (p. 71.)

In regard to the view of Isaiah ix. 6, 7, Hebrew scholars have had many contests, and differ in their renderings. The following is from the Targum of Jonathan, in the second century:

"The prophet says, To the house of David a child is born, to us a son is given, and he will take upon himself the preservation of the law; from the presence of the causer of wonderful counsels, the God enduring forever, his name will be called the anointed, in whose days shall be multiplied to those who obey the law, and to those who keep peace, there will be no end to the throne of David and of his government, for estab-

lishing and for building it with judgment and with justice now and forever."

The term Anointed or Messiah (Christ) is often applied in the Old Testament: 1 Samuel xii. 3, "Behold, here I am! witness against me before the Lord and his anointed (or Messiah) the King." 2 Samuel xxiii. 1, "David the son of Jesse said, And the man who was raised on high, the Messiah of the God of Jacob," etc. Also see Psalm xx. 6, and Isaiah xlv. 1, "Thus saith the Lord to his Messiah, to Cyrus." The reign of Hezekiah was so accompanied with peace and success, that Hillel said, "There is no Messiah for the Israelites, for they had it at the time of Hezekiah."

If we were to judge from the peculiar phraseology of the Scriptures, our thoughts might be distracted by other objects of worship than the Supreme; as, for instance, Deut. xxx. 15; Jer. xxi. 8. And in 1 Chron. xxix. 20, the term "worship" is applied equally to the Highest and to David: they "bowed down their heads and worshiped the Lord and the King." Those who are so desirous of other objects of adoration, might argue, as the term worship is addressed in the Scriptures to David, therefore David must be acknowledged as God!

As an instance of the ambiguous nature of the Hebrew language,\* Dr. Kennicott, in translating the 109th

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\* Chaldee or Aramaic, more properly. This language was adopted by the Jews during the Babylonian captivity.

The Aryan are distinct from the Semitic family, which is known to us chiefly in the Syriac and Chaldee language. This race, judged from their idioms of speech, are connected with the races of North

Psalm, in which David "utters such fearful imprecations against his foes," gives the original text, and by it demonstrates that the great king is merely stating the terrible curses and anathema which his enemies have desired may fall upon him and upon his posterity to the latest generations; but the learned doctor was not allowed to vindicate the memory of David from this great stigma, which has rested for so many centuries upon his name, as having uttered language that would be a pollution from the mouth of Red-Cloud, because the "Establishment" might be "shaken."

After alluding to this circumstance in the life of Dr.

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Africa. The physiognomy of the Jew is retained to this day, not because of *any suspension of the laws of nature*, but because of the *peculiarities of the race* of which he is a descendant. He does not belong to our (the Aryan) family, but to the Aramaic or the Arabic race. The modern Abyssinian and the ancient Phœnicians are of the same etymological class. The genealogical relationship between the Aryan and Semitic families of speech are in the *dimness of remote ages*. The differences between Sanskrit and Hebrew are very great!

When the inscriptions at Nineveh come to be better understood, more light will no doubt dawn on this subject. There is no question that ancient Babylonian literature was in a Semitic language. The book of Ezra contains fragments in Chaldee contemporaneous with the inscriptions of Xerxes. That which Laban affixed in Gen. xxxi. 47—*Jegar-sahadutha*—is in the same language, as are also the *Targum* of Jonathan and the few original words in Mark,—*Talithakumi*, *Ephphatha*, and *Abba*. In the tenth century the Jews adopted the Arabic as their literary language, and in the thirteenth century returned to a sort of modernized Hebrew, which they use at the present time. In a *strict* etymological sense, there are but two *families* of speech, the Aryan and the Semitic.\*

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\* The reader is referred to Müller's Lectures, First Series, Lecture VII.

Kennicott, and after devoting a chapter to his "Dissertation" to the Bible, that truly enlightened and honest man, John Jackson,\* arrived at the following conclusions: That the text of the Scriptures has been so corrupted by the various translators "as to throw great doubts and uncertainty upon the genuineness of many parts which involved questions of theological speculation." After citing very many of the highest authorities in ancient and in modern times, he says, "*These facts prove that the Bible is not the inspired and infallible word of God, for the 'word of God' is perfect, and admits of no emendation.*"

He also says, "The Bible has not only been corrupted

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\* For the information of those unacquainted with the life and character of John Jackson, I will state that he was one of the most eloquent speakers of his time. The first time the writer ever heard him was in Virginia in 1837; and in the presence of slaveholders and Bible Christians he exposed "those lying priests who sought scriptural defences"\* for that enormous wickedness of human slavery in the demonstration of authority. The impression he made on his audience on that occasion was very great. He died in 1856, in the maturity of his life, the last hours of which were given to the work from which I have quoted. The following is from a letter from his nearest and dearest friend and companion: "That book was written under a deep and living concern; it was written for posterity. Often in great physical prostration he corrected the proofs. When it was finished, and the first copies were sent to him, his countenance was radiant with peace and joy." Soon afterwards "the silver cord was loosened." The opinion of his friend John H. Andrews (and he was a competent judge) was, that thus passed from this state of mutability, in the fullness of felicity, one of the purest souls that ever inhabited a tenement of clay!

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\* Whittier's Randolph of Roanoke.

by translators and transcribers so as to throw doubts on the genuineness of many parts in its historical narrations, but there are contradictions and inaccuracies which destroy a claim to their divine authenticity. *In some places fact and fiction have been so intimately blended that it is impossible to decide where one ends and the other begins.* Hence, those parts which have a *miraculous or mythological* coloring must be received with great caution, and in some instances wholly rejected."

The views that that eminent servant of the Lord, Elias Hicks, had upon this subject are well known, and need not be recapitulated. I will, however, give an extract from a sermon delivered at Falls, Bucks County, in 1824, which was taken in short-hand by M. T. C. Gould, and is to be found in his sermons (page 250). It is eminently pertinent to the subject before us. He says,—

"This animal body of Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, and therefore must be nothing as to the visible part but flesh and blood, as nothing else could emanate from her. So here, now, this outward body, this flesh and blood, was born of a woman, which shows us why Jesus always calls himself the Son of Man; because he was verily and actually so, for he could use no evasions. Now, I have heard suggestions from rational beings that Jesus mentioned this to deceive the people, and turn them away; to make them believe something that was not correct; that it was only a speech that did not apply to him. But it was the truth, for he could speak nothing but the truth,

and he knew with a full certainty that he was the son of man as well as any of us can know so; and therefore he asserted it abundantly." We see that this flesh and blood never could have been, in a strict sense, the Son of God, but a creature created by God, by his power.

The peculiar views on the subject of the Scriptures led to much persecution in the rise of the Society. And in regard to their opinions, I will cite from a work entitled a "Review of Charges made against the Society of Friends as Exhibited in a Pamphlet called 'A Declaration,'" etc. It is a compilation from the writings of Friends by the late Dr. William Gibbons, of Wilmington, and was published and indorsed by the Representative Committee of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, in 1846, of which John J. White was clerk.

"The Lord God opened to me," said George Fox, "by his invisible power, how that every man was enlightened by the divine Light of Christ. This I saw in the pure openings of the Light without the help of any man: *neither did I then know where to find it in the Scriptures*, though afterwards, searching the Scriptures, I found it." (p. 14.)

William Dewsbury is quoted: "This I witness to all the sons of men, that the knowledge of eternal life *I came not to by the letter of the Scripture*, nor by hearing men speak the name of God." (*Ibid.*, p. 14.)

Scriptural truths, early Friends believed, were spiritually discerned. George Fox said, "The letter is carnal, and killeth." In like manner said Isaac Pen-

nington, "The letter read out of the Spirit darkeneth and killeth." (*Ibid.*, p. 18.)

Many quotations are given from Robert Barclay. "The letter or law," he says, "which is without us, *kills*; but the gospel, which is the *inward, spiritual* law, gives *life*; for it consists not so much in words as in virtue." (*Ibid.*, p. 21.)

In reference to Matt. xxvi. 26, William Penn says, "Here they (the Scriptures) are proper; there, metaphorical: in one place literal, in another mystically to be understood." (*Ibid.*, p. 38.)

An extract from a sermon of Thomas Wetherald is given:—"And I want us, therefore, in our investigation of *spiritual* things to bring spiritual evidence to prove spiritual things. Let us attend to spiritual reflections, and not be looking to the *Scriptures*, and to the systems of men, and to the words of preachers; for *all* these, being of an external character, *can only form an ignis-fatuus* which leads to bewilder, and dazzles to blind." (*Ibid.*, p. 28.)

The following is from the "Berean:" "Now, the revelations respecting the nature of God, which were made to the Israelites, are *true* when viewed as in connection with, and as having relation to, their spiritual condition; but to any other state they are not true; therefore, *such revelations*, abstractly taken, **ARE NOT TRUE IN THEMSELVES,—ARE NOT THE TRUTH OF GOD.**" (*Ibid.*, p. 33.)

Elias Hicks says, "If the Scriptures were absolutely necessary, he (the Almighty) had power to communicate them to all the nations of the earth; for he has

his own way, as a path in the clouds; he knows how to deal out to all his rational creatures. But they were not necessary, and perhaps *not suited to any other people than they* to whom they were written."

The following extracts are rendered from the sermons of Elias Hicks: "He (Jesus) was tempted in all points as we are. Now, how could he be tempted if he had been fixed *in a state of perfection*, in which *he could not turn aside*? Can you suppose, as rational beings, that such a being could be tempted? No; not any more than God Almighty could be tempted. Perfection is perfection, *and cannot be tempted. It is impossible.*" (*Ibid.*, p. 88.)

"Here we find the Son of God saw no alternative; for if he gave up his testimony in order to save his natural life, *he could not be saved* with God's salvation; hence he surrendered to the Divine Will rather than *lose his standing and favor* with his Almighty Father: and what a blessed example it was!" (*Ibid.*, p. 86.)

Many extracts from the writings of early Friends are given as to their views on this subject, which I will condense. The italics are from the "Review." Job Scott says, Jesus "conquered all his soul's enemies in *our capacity*. Hence he said, 'Be of good cheer; for I have overcome the world.' And this he could not have said in sincerity had he not conquered in our capacity." (*Ibid.*, p. 87.)

"George Fox was charged with saying that he was equal with God. To this he answered, that it was not so spoken; but that He that sanctified, and they that are sanctified, are one (Heb. ii. 11); and all the saints

are one. Thus the Scripture doth witness: 'Ye are the sons of God.'" (*Ibid.*, p. 85.)

William Dewsbury says, "Every one of the children of the Light is in a measure of growth in him; the *same mind* is in them that was in Christ Jesus." And Frances Hawgill: "He that is born from above is the son of God." (*Ibid.*, p. 85.)

Edward Burroughs, in reviewing the temptations of Jesus, says, "This nature was not God, whose nature is *infinite*, eternal, unmeasurable; not subject to hunger or thirst, nor to heat and cold, nor *subject to temptation*." (*Ibid.*, p. 89.)

Isaac Pennington is cited: "He who was the first fruits, had honor above all his brethren; *being anointed with oil of gladness above his fellows*." (*Ibid.*, p. 90.)

In speaking of Jesus, Elias Hicks is quoted by the "Review" as saying, "He was *only an outward Saviour*, that healed their outward diseases, and gave them strength of body to enjoy the outward land. This was the figure of the great Comforter. It was the soul that wanted salvation; but this *no outward Saviour could do, no external Saviour could have a hand in*."

On this subject Isaac Pennington remarks, "This healing diseases, with other miracles which he wrought, was but a *shadow* of what he would work and perform inwardly, in the day of his spirit and holy power." (*Ibid.*, p. 102.)

Elias Hicks is cited, as follows: "Revelation is the first thing; the first as regards earthly things. God is the Sun of the spiritual world, and the life and the light of that Sun shows us his will, with the

same plainness that the outward sun shows outward things." The following extract is also given by the "Review," and exhibits the view of this enlightened man,—that the Creator manifests himself in an INTELLIGENT manner to his INTELLIGENT creatures, in accordance with the Scriptural declaration, "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."

Elias Hicks says, "In those things which relate to our moral conduct, we all have understanding alike, as reasonable beings; and we know when we do wrong to our fellow-creatures; we know it by our rational understanding. WE WANT NO OTHER INSPIRATION THAN REASON AND JUSTICE." Again: "If we transgress against God, or even against our fellow-creatures, the act hath its adequate reward, and *it* will make us sorry for what we have done; that is, we shall be losers, and gain nothing; for no man shall gain by doing evil." (*Ibid.*, 157.)

"All our happiness in time and eternity depends upon the *inward* knowledge and right information which we receive *by communion with our heavenly Father.*" (*Ibid.*, p. 158.)

In regard to the subject immediately before us, Edward Stabler\* says, "How more than feeble must be our *imperfect conjectures* concerning the same things, formed from the mere history of them, which has been transmitted to us through the uncertain mediums of fallible copyists and translators: or the *still more fal-*

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\* Letters, p. 132.

*lible interpretations* of men who have evinced their unfitness for the service by a conduct and conversation the reverse of his whom they profess to serve."

The rays which have radiated from these great minds have aided much in elucidating the truth. Let us not rely entirely on their efforts, however, but, with thanks to God for the LIGHT which he has conferred, proceed in the task before us, attempting to separate "*imperfect conjectures*" and erroneous *interpretation* from the truth as it is in Jesus.

## CHAPTER II.

India—Brahminism—Buddhism—Why is Christianity a failure in the Orient?

THE view given in the preceding chapter, some may say, is but a one-sided glance at the opinions of early Friends. This I will admit, and, as there has been much controversy on this subject\*, will only say that the diversity that existed among them was not wonderful, considering that they came from so many different societies, and lived in an age so comparatively unenlightened.

But it is certain that they held opinions much in advance of their time, and, also, that the career of the Society would have been much more brilliant, and that their usefulness would have been greatly enhanced, had they adhered more to the original principle which distinguished them as a people.

We find the Society advancing with a growth and influence that astonished and alarmed the ruling powers in England up to a certain period in their progress. And then a time came in which the advance was but slow. And then another in which they seemed

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\* The views in this essay the author presents on his own individual responsibility, and does not profess to speak for the Society of which he is a member.

to halt as between two opinions. He that arose as a giant in the early time, seemed shorn of half his strength, and the people called Quakers soon ceased to be dreaded by priest or prelate. A great work had been accomplished, but it was left incomplete !

Not only in this country and in Europe, but also among the ancient people of India, has an irrepressible longing been awakened for a more intelligent and rational view of religion. The progress of Moham-medanism has been totally checked ; and among that vast population of nearly one hundred millions of people there are many patriotic Hindoos, who are seeking to bring back the first state of Brahminism, and of re-establishing the monotheism of the early Vedas. Many intelligent Hindoos (all the people can read and write) are disgusted with the tri-personal views of the divine nature which have been established in their theological system, and are desiring a return to the simple worship of Brahma !

In India, as in America, the popular theology has its dogma,—a trinity in the divine being. Brahma is the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Siva the destroyer. The eldest faith in the world is Brahminism. And in their earliest sacred books, it is unquestionable that one Being is assumed as the Creator of all things. The Menu code was instituted long after the first or early Vedas, and the desire is to return to the old faith. The chronology\* of Hindoo is long anterior to ours.

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\* In a work called "Antiquities," published in 1790 by Sir William Jones and others, the following is given as a preface to a *Varanes Almanac* : "A thousand great ages are a day of BRAHMA ; a

When Alexander the Great crossed the Indus, three centuries before our era, his soldiers found in India, as at the present day, the same caste, all subservient to the Brahmins, the priestly order of society, all occupations, the military, agricultural, and commercial, all subordinate to theirs.

Then, as now, the Greek found a class of men who lived lives of seclusion, and who practiced and submitted to austerities and privations. Contemplation they claimed to be the business of life with them—to

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thousand such days are an Indian hour of VISHNU; six hundred thousand such hours make a period of RUDRA; and a million of Rudras (*or two quadrillions five hundred and ninety-two thousand trillions of lunar years*) are but a second to the SUPREME BEING. The Hindoo theologians deny the conclusions to be orthodox; time they say exists not at all with God; and they advise the astronomers to mind their own business, without meddling with theology."

The terms used are thus explained by Sir William, which is from "Menu, Son of Brahma:" "The before-mentioned age of the gods, or twelve thousand of their years multiplied by seventy-one, form what is named here a Mawantara, and what they call a day and night of the gods is utterly beyond computation." The learned author has entered largely into the subject of chronology, and the conclusion *that time is long* is also the conclusion of science. Take for instance that deep gorge of six miles, the Niagara River, which Sir Charles Lyell has demonstrated to have been formed by the action of the Falls; and, judging by the description and observation of Father Hennepin in the year 1678, taking these and subsequent data as a basis of calculation, the action of the waters in working their way back through the piles of strata which form the walls of the river; and taking the estimate of an inch a year, the formation of the present falls has taken about 376,000 years. Prof. Hall has shown that after a recession of two miles farther, the falls will be reduced to about eighty feet. But we need not trouble *ourselves* concerning it, for it will only take about 125,333 years to produce that result.

rise above humanity by a perpetual devotion and meditation on the divine Brahma.

The other orders of society are greatly beneath these, who esteem themselves the twice-born men, who sanctify themselves with sacraments, ablutions, prayers, and reading the Holy Vedas. Tribute is due to them,—not reverence merely, but also the corn, wine, and oil.

This caste first corrupted the religion, and introduced other gods into the theological plan, which, ages since, was no doubt simple enough; but, as the priestly class increased in influence and power, divinities were invented to suit the capacity of those who had been debased by superstition; for the Brahmins believe in an intercourse with the Supreme, *but not for all men*. Hence the introduction of divinities to suit the Vaisyas, or the poor Soodras, the lowest caste.

Thus gradually, after the primitive simplicity had been by degrees abandoned, the leaven of power and dominion began to ferment in the minds of the Brahmin, till at last he assumed that the fruits of the earth were all his, and obtained complete supremacy, both temporal and spiritual, over his fellows.

This immense mass of false theology enlightened minds among the Brahmins themselves are attempting to overthrow. Whether any success will attend their efforts remains to be seen; for the simple theism of the primitive faith has been so overlaid with the diluvium which ages of polytheism and its consequent superstitions have accumulated, that it is only

here and there that the old formation can be seen cropping out above the surface.

That there have been upheavings and disruptions in the religious world of Asia is very evident. Buddha was an Asiatic reformer, whose history is so enveloped in myths and fabulous accounts, that it is impossible to fix any data to his career. From him is Buddhism, which is the professed faith of three hundred millions of people. The generic meaning of the term is "intelligence;" and there is no doubt that Buddha was simply a reformer among the Brahmins, and sought to substitute the simple creed of faith and morality for the cruel laws and customs which caste and priestcraft had engendered. The time in which he lived is lost in the mist of ages. Since then, Buddhistic authorities hold that innumerable Buddhas have appeared to save the world; among them is Saint Sākya, who was the ninth incarnation of Vishnu. He is claimed to have been born about one thousand years B.C., and the following is rendered as his history:

While in the fourth heaven he resolves to save the world, and chooses to be born as the son of Suddhodan and of Māyā, who was a virgin, a descendant of the race of the Kshattriva caste, from whom the kings of Ayodhya claim descent. He descends from heaven on a white elephant, and is conceived amid rays of light. Great miracles usher in his birth, which was through the right side, and he soon proclaims his mission. His mother dies seven days after his birth, and he is cared for by her sister Gautami. After arriving at maturity, he leaves his home,—displays an ascetic turn of mind,

performs the most severe penances, and goes to the Bodhimanda, or the temple of intelligence, at Gāya, where every Bodhisattra (intelligence of truth) becomes a Buddha. Temptations now assail him, but he withstands them all,—love, sin, and ambition,—and finally, through resistance to these, attains the Bodha (intelligence), and becomes transformed into “the awakened, the intelligent, the knowing.” Japanese, *Budso*; Chinese, *Fo*, the enlightened; Thibetan, *Sangsgyis*, bright, shining.

Though he teaches in but one tongue, yet he is understood by all the nations to which he is sent, and converts kings and their subjects. His miracles are attested by the sacred writings, and his benevolence is dispensed to all,—the rich, the poor, the sick. Multitudes flock to greet him; he visits many lands, and rival cities claim that great feats were wrought in them. Conspiracies are formed against him, but avail naught. He humbles the prevailing philosophy and ruins their lucrative occupation, and finally dies at the age of eighty, amidst great convulsions of nature.

Enormous ruins near Gāya attest the reality of Sākya's existence. At Srāvasti, a rival city, a magnificent monastery was built; from hence the Buddhist holy books have mostly issued. Amid so much that is fabulous, the truth is still discernible, and Sākya seems to have propagated a comparatively rational philosophy. He rejected the authority of the Vedas, the sacrifices and endless ceremonies of Brahminism.

The faith that he taught, in the process of time, became corrupted by priest and people; but there is no

doubt that it was originally simple, ethical, and enlightened. And that he opposed mythology and priestcraft would seem evident from his precepts: "My law is one grace for all; like heaven, it affords room for men and women, for boys and girls, for rich and poor." "It is difficult to be rich and learn the way." He taught self-sacrifice and the taming of sensuality. Buddhism is now difficult to be understood, and a volume would be required for its elucidation. Its philosophy admits not of creation. "The worlds are, from the not-beginning, in a continual revolution of arising and perishing." Succession is the only reality. A Buddha alone can conceive the worlds. It is a heresy to believe the worlds limited or illimited, or neither limited nor illimited.


Perfect freedom is arrived at only by the escape from the bonds of desire and from the power of past deeds. It is only when we come into this condition of mind that we see with a "divine eye." The succession of existences is a succession of souls. Death destroys the body, but leaves the germ behind, which consists of deeds and their consequences. It is according to this germinating power—the Karman (morality of actions)—that is determined an animal, a man, a demon, or a god! The Buddhistic metempsychosis is a metempsychosis of souls. Each soul inherits the tendency of its precursor. We ought, therefore, to act well our part, not only on our own account, but also for the sake of the soul that is to follow us. As they say, "A lamp is lighted from another; the lamps differ, the second only receiving the light from the

first. So it is also in regard to souls." A continuous metempsychosis thus takes place, till all sin is extinguished, and finally the Sansāra passes into the Nirvāna, or an absorption of the individual soul in God.

As this is the leading faith in China, Japan, Thibet, and Ceylon, many different views have been rendered by different travelers because of not understanding their forms. No doubt the Chinese have reported us as polytheists on visiting cathedrals at Rome, or reading a treatise on the Trinity at Oxford. If the Brahminical school have Siva, the destroyer, our "holy" books also treat of an evil one walking to and fro in the earth.

Thibet seems to be the center of Buddhism. Therein the chief Lama resides. It is not easy to determine his relative position to the entire system, for, on the whole, the hierarchy seems somewhat democratic in its government. The Grand Lama, it is held, never dies; he no sooner disappears in one form than he reappears in another; no sooner is one laid in the tomb than his successor is determined on in an infant in whom the soul of the departed has taken up his abode. The child is brought up in a convent with a watchful care, that he may not be defiled by sin, and is taught to look upon himself as the abode of the Divinity, and to receive homage as such.

Buddhism has not much hold in Hindostan. Centuries before our era, terrible conflicts took place between it and Brahminism, in which the latter was successful in almost extirpating the former in India. They



have both fallen into terrible corruptions ; but the latter seems to be exhibiting some recuperative power in the expressed wish to remodel their system and to *revise the Vedas*.

The Oriental degradation exhibited in these religions should teach us to guard well the avenues that lead to ecclesiastic despotism and tyranny. India once had freedom of thought, and a pure and simple faith ; had its epoch in which the oneness of the Divine Mind was recognized by all. But unrelentingly and patiently has priestcraft striven, and the nation is in chains.

It may be asked why Christianity does not meet the requirement of the Hindoo. This is an important and deeply interesting inquiry. For there is not much hope that the old faith will be revived, by reason of the influences from within the system of Brahminism. It is very questionable whether the new can be thus overthrown in the minds of the people, so stultified have they become, and the pure monotheism of the early Vedas restored. It is indeed a question most pregnant with thought, why the faith which we have tendered to Orientalism has so entirely failed in superseding the existing superstitions, and reviving the ancient idea of a direct communication between God and man.

Efforts to disseminate Christianity in India have not been wanting. By the exertions of the Jesuits in the first place, and in the last century, the power, influence, and patronage of the English government, have been directed towards the establishment of evangelical Christianity in that vast country. Missions have been organized on a gigantic scale, and the con-

tributions of the civilized world have been poured into their coffers. They have no doubt been active, earnest, and energetic.

And yet it is to-day confessed that all these efforts have been in vain,—that the faith that was first inculcated from an obscure corner of Asia, and that finally spread itself over Europe and America, has proved itself utterly futile and unavailing among the nations of the Orient. So that it is now calculated that each convert costs one hundred thousand dollars.

Why is it that the religion of Christ is thus preached in vain ?

In order to answer this question intelligently, let us examine the Hindoo side, and give the reason which they assign, remembering that these people are not deficient in understanding, education, or analytical power. And in regard to morality, a recent traveler reports that among three hundred millions of people he did not see one intoxicated native, or hear from one of them a profane word !

The first objection made to evangelical Christianity is, It does not meet our requirements !

It does not, as we understand it, overthrow polytheism, and teach the oneness of the Divine Mind !

Our system has its Trinity,—Brahma, the creative principle,—in Sanskrit, “the Father;” Vishnu, the preserving and protecting principle, or the Son of God,—the incarnate Word,—represented in the person of Christna, who came upon this earth ages since, as pastor and prophet, to save humanity, and who perished by an ignominious death; and Siva,—or the principle

of nature, that presides at reconstruction, death, and decay,—the spirit that controls the eternity of motion and action, or the universal law of change.

We inquire of your books. Here we find also a Trinity,—the same “Divine Mystery.” You have “God the Father,” “God the Son,” and “God the Holy Ghost.” The church at Rome has deified the Virgin Mary, and your Scriptures speak of an “Evil Spirit,” and also of the “Word that was in the beginning.”

We ask, To which do we owe supreme allegiance? Your reply is not satisfactory. It is not clear. It is not convincing. It does not concentrate our thoughts. It invokes a double-mindedness, not more favorable to devotion than the faith which we have received from our fathers.

The following was the answer of a Brahmin to a late resident of Hindostan :\*

“Why should I change my religion? Ours is as good as yours, if not better; and you date it all since eighteen hundred centuries: while our belief is continuous, without interruption, from the creation of the world.” 271a

“God, according to you,—and you thus diminish him,—required several efforts to provide you with a religion. According to us, he revealed his law in creating us.

“Whenever man has strayed, he has manifested himself to recall him to the primitive faith.

“Lastly, he incarnated himself in the person of

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\* Louis Jacollot,—“La Bible dans l’Inde,” p. 284.

Christna, who came not to instruct humanity in new laws, but to efface original sin and purify morals.

“This incarnation you have adopted, as you have adopted our tradition of the creation of Adima and Héva.

“We expect another before the end of the world, that of Christna coming to the encounter of the Prince of Rackchasas, disguised as a horse, and which you have just told me of your Apocalypse. You have borrowed this prophecy from us.

“Your religion is but an infiltration, a souvenir, of ours ; wherefore, then, desire me to adopt it ?

“If you would succeed, do not begin by teaching me principles that I find in all our holy books, and a *morale* which we possess in India from long before Europe had opened its eyes to the light of civilization.”

## CHAPTER III.

Rammohun Roy—Revision of the Vedas—Rational Christianity in India—Keshub Chunder.

FROM the dark presentation of the last chapter we are apt to turn away. But, reader, there is a bright side to the picture, in the efforts that are being made to resuscitate India, who, thanks to her priests, has for centuries turned from the worship of the one true and living God, and who have substituted the adoration of angels, saints, *devas* and *richis*, for devotion to Him.

To the causes which have led to this awakening, we will have to refer to the circumstances and character of that distinguished Brahmin, Rammohun Roy. He was born in 1780, in the province of Bengal, and was educated as became his high caste at Patna; where he acquired a knowledge of the Arabic and Persian languages, and where he also studied logic and mathematics. When he had completed these studies, he went to Calcutta to learn Sanskrit,\* the sacred language

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\* Since Rammohun Roy's time ETHNOLOGY has become a science. Professor Bopp, of Berlin, has shown, in his "Comparative Grammar," how the language of the Vedas (the Sanskrit) is the foundation of the languages of Europe. Upon this subject the late Professor Wilson, of Oxford, said, in speaking of Professor Bopp, he "may be considered to have established, beyond reasonable question, a near relationship between the languages of nations separated by the in-

of the Hindoo Scriptures; the knowledge of which was necessary to his caste and profession as a Brahmin.

The study of these convinced him of the pure system of theism which the early Vedas taught, of one sole God, who was infinite in his perfections and eternal in his duration; and that a mental rather than a corporeal worship was required. His attention was early directed to Mohammedanism, and his father was obliged to withdraw from him his countenance, though he secretly contributed to his support.

On his father's death, he inherited a large fortune, and he was at liberty to pursue the tenor of his inclination. He therefore published several works in the Bengalee language against Hindoo idolatry, on account of which an unsuccessful attempt was made to deprive him of his caste. He then collated and published, in the Hindostanee tongue,—from the Sanskrit,—extracts from the Vedas for the information of his countrymen,

tervention of centuries and the distance of half the globe." The word *Aryan* is quite a modern one, and is of Sanskrit origin. Whittier, in his poem of "Miriam," says,—

"The angels to our Aryan sires  
Talked by the earliest household fires."

This relationship will soon be recognized, and the significance of this term will be understood. Professorships of Sanskrit are already established in the best European colleges. Chronology must adapt itself to the domain of science. Timid and credulous faith in the data of six thousand years for the creation of our globe will not always be fashionable. Men of science will not forever be compelled to *whisper* the truths of creative wisdom in a *closet*!

which was contrary to the usages of his order. This abridgment he afterwards translated into English, in the preface of which he speaks of the persecutions he had suffered.

“My constant reflections,” he writes, “on the inconvenient, or rather injurious, rites introduced by the peculiar practice of Hindoo idolatry, which more than any other pagan worship destroys the texture of society, together with compassion for my countrymen, have compelled me to use every possible effort to awaken them from the dream of error, and, by making them acquainted with the Scriptures, enable them to contemplate, with true devotion, the unity and omnipresence of nature’s God. By taking a path which conscience and sincerity direct, I, born a Brahmin, have exposed myself to the complainings and reproaches even of some of my relatives, whose prejudices are strong, and whose temporal advantage depends upon the present system. But these, however accumulated, I can tranquilly bear ; trusting a day will arrive when my humble endeavors will be viewed with justice, and, perhaps, acknowledged with gratitude. At any rate, whatever men may say, I cannot be deprived of this consolation : my motives are acceptable to that being who beholds in secret and compensates openly.”

After the publication of this, and other appeals to the Hindoo ancient faith, he was led to examine Christianity, and, although those with whom he associated were Trinitarians, yet from his examination of the New Testament, especially the *Hebrew significance of words*, he arrived at the conclusion, and arose from this

investigation with the firm conviction, that the doctrine of the Trinity was not inculcated by Jesus.

And having been convinced that his teachings and precepts inculcated the purest system of morals, without *one vestige* of the polytheism of evangelical Christianity, he *compiled* a pamphlet, for the use of his countrymen, in Bengalee, entitled "The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness."

Not long after the publication of this work, he was assailed in a tract entitled "The Friend of India," and also by Dr. Marshman, "*a Christian missionary*," who designated him as a "heathen," and in his paper stated that he (the doctor) "*belonged to that class who think no one can be a real Christian without believing the divinity and the atonement of Jesus Christ.*"

The great offense that Rammohun had committed in the eyes of these critical champions of Christianity was that, in the compilation which he had made from the New Testament, he omitted "*those parts which have a miraculous and mythological coloring*," which, John Jackson says, "*must be received with great caution, and in some instances wholly rejected.*"

In the original publication the author says, "I feel persuaded that by separating from the other matters contained in the New Testament the moral precepts found in that book, these will be more likely to produce the desirable effect of improving the hearts and minds of men of different persuasions and degrees of understanding. For historical and some other passages are liable to doubts and disputes of free-thinkers and anti-Christians, especially miraculous relations,

which are much less wonderful than the fabricated tales handed down to the natives of Asia, and consequently would be apt at best to carry little weight with them. On the contrary, the moral doctrines, tending evidently to the maintenance of the peace and harmony of mankind at large, are beyond the reach of metaphysical perversion, and intelligible alike to the learned and the unlearned."

Rammohun Roy died in England in 1833, when on a mission to the British court from the King of Delhi. During his life he exerted a powerful influence in India in behalf of rational Christianity, by reason of his numerous works and the suavity and grace of his manners and person. When in England, and on the continent, his society was much sought. His conversational powers were of the highest order, and a half a century ago he had the sympathy and encouragement in this country of such minds as William Ellery Channing, Elias Hicks,\* and Edward Stabler.

The seed that he planted in India has not been without fruit, and to-day is reared a great and mighty tree which promises for the future of that country the most auspicious results! The following letter will convey a comprehensive idea of the character of those who are engaged in propagating the truths of the gospel in the Orient:

"EGYPT, Oct. 1st, 1870.

"BELOVED BRETHREN,—The grace of God be with you. May his holy Spirit sanctify and gladden your

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\* Elias Hicks corresponded with him.

hearts forever ! Accept my brotherly love. With tears I took leave of you and bade adieu to your country's loved shores. For, though brief my sojourn in that land, you have won my heart with the power of love. A hundred attractions have endeared you to me, and nothing will, I believe, rend asunder the strong ties of spiritual attachment which bind us together, though physical separation there must be. England is out of sight,—the billows of the mighty sea roll between you and me,—her green fields and lovely flowers, her flourishing towns and solitary hills, her sweet homes and noble charities, no longer greet my eyes ; yet in the deep recesses of my heart she has an abiding place. I will continue to love you as my friends, yea, as my brothers and sisters, and will pray to God Almighty for your welfare here and hereafter. I will ever remember with gratitude the kindness and hospitality with which you received me in your homes, and the affection with which you fed me when I was hungry, comforted me when I was weary, and nursed me when I was ill ; and I will always carefully preserve the numerous and valuable tokens of love with which you sent me away. England ! I am grateful to thee ; God bless thee for thy kindness to a poor Indian !

“ I must thank you also, dear brethren, for the success of my mission. I went to you to advocate the cause of my dear fatherland ; and I rejoice when I think of the enthusiasm with which, on several occasions, you assured me of your readiness to redress its grievances and supply its manifold wants. Earnestly do I hope that the interest excited in the subject will

ere long assume practical forms, and result in the adoption of measures calculated to promote those urgent reforms which I demanded of you,—the education of the poor, the improvement of women, the suppression of the liquor-traffic, and the removal of civil disabilities in the way of native reformers. Help us, oh, help us, England! in furthering these great works of reform; and we and our children and generations yet unborn will bless thee.

“But a more important and comprehensive mission brought me to your country. God be thanked that it also has borne some fruit. The spiritual union of the East and the West—my long-cherished ideal—is not a dream. Sure I am that it will be realized in the fullness of time. My faith has been intensified by what I have seen and heard in England; the religious tendencies of the age have confirmed my hope. There is in every branch of Christ’s Church in the West a growing desire to cast off the fetters of sectarianism, and to recognize a broader basis of faith and worship. I am convinced that you are painfully alive to the grave evils which have arisen from the endless multiplication of sects, and that you are beginning to feel that you ought to be more charitable and tolerant towards each other. Your large hearts cannot dwell in small tabernacles. I have also found clear indications of an anxiety to turn away from the letter that killeth to the spirit that giveth life. For eighteen centuries dogma after dogma has been added to the Christian faith, and tenets piled upon tenets, till the Spirit of Christ has been wellnigh quenched under the crushing

weight of a most voluminous theology. Thousands of men and women daily seek Christ in the sepulchre of books and dogmas, churches and rites ; but the voice of truth solemnly whispers, He is not there. The waters of life they have sought in the dry well of dogmas, but their thirst is not quenched. And now, taught by the sad lessons of experience, England seems to say, ' I am tired of dogmas, I am sick of sects. In the simplicity of living faith I will worship my God ; in the sweetness of loving faith I will enter into fellowship with all his children.' Such appears to be the craving and tendency of other nations as well. Indeed, the world is moving onward to the consummation of that universal Church which owns no other creed except the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. The history of the past points to it—the present age demands it ; everywhere there are cheering indications of its dawning light. It is God's will that it should come. Let his will be done. Let us all unite to uprear his true Church. Let each nation come with all the elements of truth and goodness in its sacred history, and all that is pure and divine in its national life. No nation, no sect, ought to be excluded, for through each God has spoken, and in each some form of truth is deposited in the flow of ages. Bring with you, English brethren, your noble charities, your industry and earnestness, and your respect for science—that glorious and perennial revelation of God to man. Come, liberal-minded children of America, with your world of modern thought and civilization, and your youthful freshness of mind and soul. Come,

all ye nations of the West, with all the riches of truth ye possess. But the circle is not yet complete. Let the nations of the East come with their ancient civilization, their sublime devotion, fervent faith, and deep spirituality; let them come with the precious inheritance of thought and sentiment bequeathed by their venerable ancestors of antiquity. Let the East come, clad in the golden robe of morning light. Then the circle of universal religion will be completed. Thus shall the Scriptures of science in the West, and the Scriptures of inspiration in the East, constitute together the Word of God. Thus shall the 'mind and strength' of the one, and the 'heart and soul' of the other, join in the service of God. Thus shall the spirit of charity, which 'went about doing all manner of good,' and the spirit of devotion, which 'went to the mountains to pray,' blend together and form the unity of divine life in man. Thus shall all sects and races and nations in the world unite to form the catholic church of God, limbs of one body supported by the same vitality, and doing the work of the same Master; a harp of many strings playing harmoniously and in praise of the Great Ruler. And thus with their blended notes making sweet music shall the prophecy of the past be fulfilled,—'And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.' The idea is grand;—is it not? Strive to realize it, my friends; and let your country and mine, and all mankind, reap the fruits of your noble efforts, and be in the bonds of brotherhood. It is our Father's wish

that all his children should join together, and as one sweet family worship him. Then let us all joyfully gather round him.

“Pausing awhile in the course of my homeward voyage in this ancient country, Egypt, I cast my eyes towards the East and the West, and in the attitude of a suppliant and a servant I humbly implore and beseech my brethren on both sides to hasten to the Father’s home. Come, brothers and sisters, from the uttermost parts of the earth, with love and gladness in your hearts, and let us gather round our ‘Father dear,’ kiss his holy feet, and sing his sweet name.

“‘We’ll crowd his gates with thankful songs,  
High as the heavens our voices raise,  
And earth with her ten thousand tongues  
Shall fill his courts with sounding praise.’

“God be with you, beloved brethren. May his redeeming grace spread over the whole earth, and bring purity and peace to all his children! Farewell.

“KESHUB CHUNDER SEN.”

The time will come in which a demand will be made for a revision of Scriptures to meet the requirements of the age. Much cannot be expected from the Church of England, although men of prominence in that organization are openly expressing their dissatisfaction with the present copy. And others hesitate not to proclaim their conviction that the revision must begin at the beginning, alleging that it is only by a just and honest spirit of criticism and *truth* that the Scriptures can be revised to meet the exigencies of the times.

It is in the hope that such an effort may be made from a competent and authoritative source that has induced this present essay.

As the New Testament will be the principal subject for elucidation, the old dispensation will receive but a passing glance; for, in reading the Scriptures, the central figure is Jesus; from him light radiates in all directions!

As an evidence of what *priestcraft is capable of doing*, I will subjoin an extract from Thomas H. Speakman's recent publication: "The clause (1 John v. 7) is not found in any of the Greek manuscripts before the sixteenth century; and of the one hundred and thirteen copies now extant, it is found in but one. Neither is it in any of the earlier Latin copies, or quoted by any of the Greek or Latin fathers in their controversies. It is wanting in the editions of Erasmus and Luther, in both the Syriac versions, the Coptic and Arabic."

Albert Barnes says, "This passage is now omitted in the best editions of the Greek Testament, and is regarded as spurious."

As a branch of the Society of Friends have incorporated this as an article of faith, it becomes doubly important to "search the Scriptures" as with a lighted candle, in order that the truth may be made apparent!

## CHAPTER IV.

Book of Job—Pentateuch—Sanskrit—Literal and Spiritual Sense—  
Opinion of the Fathers—Trinity and Plato.

THE book of Job is now believed to be the oldest of the scriptural writings. The land of Uz, in which he lived, is east of Palestine. He was not a Jew, but an Arab noble or prince. Professor Hitchcock, in his analysis of the Bible, says that this book is the oldest in the world; but the Brahmin authorities just as confidently assert that the most ancient books of their Scriptures, the Vedas,\* were written *very many* thou-

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\* It is now universally acknowledged that Sanskrit is the classical language of the world; and it would seem to present an irrefutable proof of India's great antiquity. I will annex a few philological comparisons :

JUPITER.—In Sanskrit, *Dyu-piri*—Father of Heaven; or, *Zeus-pitri*, of which the Greeks have made the word Zeus.

PALLAS.—The goddess of Wisdom. In Sanskrit, *Pala-sa*—protecting wisdom.

ATHENIA.—The Greek goddess of Chastity. In Sanskrit, *A-tanaia*—without children.

NEPTUNE.—In Sanskrit, *Na-pita-na*—who governs the furious waves.

MARS.—The god of War. In Sanskrit, *Mri*—who gives death.

PLUTO.—The god of Hell. In Sanskrit, *Plushta*—who strikes with fire.

HERCULES.—In Sanskrit, *Hara-Kala*—hero of battles.

MESOPOTAMIA.—In Sanskrit, *Madya-potoma*—country between rivers.

sands of years before the date affixed to the book of Job. In determining the chronological order of the sacred writings of the Jews, we have little or nothing to guide us, except what we find recorded therein. The first books of which we have any record were found in the reign of King Josias. They were brought to him by the scribe Saphan, who received them from Hilkiash the priest. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14, 15, and 1 Esdras i. 33.

This is about all that we have in the Old Testament concerning the history of those writings, and we will be compelled, in judging of their chronological order, to be governed by the internal evidence which they present. According to the Jewish computation, the time at which the Lord appeared to Moses was about the year of the world 2500, and Saphan the scribe made public the "book of the law" near the year 3376, making an interval of 876 years.

The book of Genesis refers to a period of about 2500 years. In its perusal we will observe a differ-

CASTABALA (strong place).—*Kastha-tala*—impenetrable strength.

MA.—The Lunar Divinity. In Sanskrit, *Ma*—the moon.

THE GAULS.—*Ga-la-ta*—the people who conquer as they march.

THE CELTS.—*Kalla-ta*—the invading chiefs.

IRELAND.—*Erin*—rocks surrounded with salt water.

NORWAY.—*Nara-vaga*—the country of mariners, or the men of the sea.

THE ALEMANNI (Germans).—*Ala-manu*—freemen.

The Brahmins have been very suspicious in regard to their Scriptures, as the *Jesuits* formerly destroyed them. The Asiatic Society of Calcutta are now collecting and compiling them. In *very many instances* the laws and traditions in Genesis are identical with them, proving that Genesis is derivative. See Appendix.

ence in the number of the pronoun, as, for instance, Gen. i. 26, compare with Gen. ii. 21, and Gen. ix. with Gen. xi. 7. The Hebrew word Jehovah being the singular, and Elohim the plural number for God, this and other circumstances, as, for example, compare Gen. i. 27 with Gen. ii. 22, have led to the generally-received opinion of biblical scholars that it was compiled from different documents, which held Elohist and Jehovistic ideas. The word "us" is thus explained in the text. Genesis is Greek, and means creation.

Learned men, in judging of the data of the five books of the Pentateuch, have experienced much difficulty, so little reference being made to them, or mention made of them, by any of the prophets, by Jeremiah or Isaiah, by the Psalmist, or Solomon, or in any other of the canonical writings of the Jews. They are not all written by the same writer; as in Leviticus the marrying of a brother's wife is forbidden, and in Deuteronomy it is enjoined.

In the Chronicles many other writings are referred to of which we have no knowledge: the books of Samuel the Seer; the book of Nathan the Prophet; the book of Jehu, etc. Hence learned men\* have widely disagreed in reference to the order in which they were indited, and have written pages upon pages in regard to it, only to disagree in their conclusions.† Professor Hitchcock on this subject says that if the Chron-

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\* Appletons' Cyclopædia says, upon this subject, "The estimates as to the real epoch of the creation of Adam between students of the Old Testament vary from 3616 to 6984 B.C." Vol. v. p. 203.

† See Appendix.

icles were written by Ezra, the date of their composition was not far from B.C. 458 ; if by Daniel, about B.C. 604.

In the early ages of the Church, several of the fathers held the opinion that much of the early history of the Jews, as it is recorded, must be understood in a spiritual sense. The Apostle Paul says,\* “ Which things are an allegory ; for these are the two covenants ; the one from Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.” And Peter, in his second epistle, chap. ii., illustrated that the truths contained in some of the Jewish history must be found *in the domain of idea*, and not to be understood altogether in the literal sense.

At a later period, many of the fathers spiritualized not only much of the history of the Old but also that of the New Testament. Jerome writes, in treating of Paul’s views, “ The apostle says, when he speaks against endless genealogies and Jewish fables, seems to me to have forbidden questions of this kind. For what is the use of clinging to the letter and assailing either the errors of the writer or the exact number of years, when it is plain that the letter killeth and the spirit giveth life? Read over the Old and the New Testament, and you will find such disagreement in the chronology and the confusion in numbers is so great between the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, that to waste time on such questions is more suited to an idle man than to a studious one.” Origen,† in reference to the outward sense, says, “ There are things con-

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\* Gal. iv. 24.

† Hom. vi., Isaiah, fol. 106, D.

tained in them which are falsities.”\* And Athanasius admonishes “that should we understand sacred writ according to the letter, we should fall into the most enormous blasphemies.”

Our early Friends, though many of them never looked into a Hebrew or a Greek lexicon, and therefore could not, as scholars, recognize how translators had corruptly wrested the Scriptures again and again from their true and *literal Hebrew sense*. Yet they were scholars in the school of *living experience*; they did not interpret the Scriptures in its literal sense altogether. George Whitehead says, “But none can see the Father with a carnal eye,” agreeing with 1 John iv. 20: “No man hath seen God at any time.” And of course such minds did not understand that the Lord talked literally with Moses, *but that these things were figures and symbols*. That this was the view of George Fox, Isaac Pennington, and William Penn is undoubted. In a sermon of Elias Hicks, published by Gould, the stenographer, page 315, he says, “But here we see that the people have been depending upon the letter. Oh, what mischief has this done in Christendom! What dreadful work has it made among the children of men! It proves itself what it is; that it is nothing but a history of passing events, which occurred eighteen hundred years ago, a great portion of which *may be true*; a great deal was the immediate experience of the servants of the Lord, and opened to them by his revealing spirit, which they have written.

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\* *Questiones ad Antiochum*, ii. p. 357, D.

It has divided into hundreds of sects, all fixing their foundations upon this literal book as though it were a sufficient rule."

The reviser, while he must adhere to the oldest and best existing copies of the Scriptures, yet when he finds that the metaphorical sense of Hebrew terms have been perverted by original mistranslation, or evident misunderstandings, or by the accidents attending old documents, he should have the honesty to tell the truth ; and when he finds, as he will find, Greek ideas and Platonic thought mingled with the simple faith that was taught in Judea eighteen hundred years ago, he should discard the one and cherish the other, for no ideas are more distinct than the philosophy of Plato and the religion of Jesus.

Volumes upon volumes have been written upon this subject, yet the truth can be rendered in a very few words, and we can readily comprehend how *degrading* tripersonal and dualistic ideas and doctrines have infused themselves into the Christian Church, and may be taught *the danger* of those symbolic and metaphoric modes of expression that Plato so delighted in.

In order to understand how the simple faith taught by Jesus came to be so monstrously corrupted as we see exhibited when we turn our eyes toward the superstitions which are enshrined at Oxford and Rome, we must appreciate the thought of Plato and the teaching of the Eclectic school, whose chief establishment was at Alexandria, in Egypt, and whose philosophy was in a flourishing condition at the time of Jesus.

They held Plato in the highest reverence and respect,

taught the tripersonality of the divine mind, and the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. Their thought was very different from the common Greek and Roman philosophy which the Apostle Paul\* condemned in his epistles to the Colossians and in his First Timothy, which philosophy "was pursuit of, and love for, wisdom." That of the Eastern nations was called Gnosticism, which signified "the perfection and full attainment of wisdom itself."

The Eclectics, as this term denotes, elected and chose out of the tenets of *all* creeds and religions, rejecting whatever was considered erroneous and wrong, and accepted that which was thought tending to virtue and goodness.

The doctrine of the Trinity impregnates the whole philosophy of Plato. In thought, we have the trinity of reason, passion, and appetite; in ethics, of wisdom, courage, and temperance; in knowledge, of science, opinion, and sensation; in ontology, of being, becoming, and not-being; in cosmogony, of God, the soul of the world, ideas, and matter; and of the state, of magistrates, warriors, and laborers.

Plato also held that it was lawful and proper to use deception and craft in the discrimination of right principles, and, holding the common people in contempt, that when it was expedient it was in accordance with his code of morals to deceive them for the purpose of promoting the cause of truth and virtue in the world.†

Some of the fathers, as, for instance, St. Hermas,

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\* 1 Philippians iv. 8.

† Mosheim, vol. i. p. 197.

this most mischievous and demoralizing idea,—a doctrine that Jesus detested, and for which he manifested a bitter scorn and just indignation. Luke xi. 40 and 44. Hypocrisy is from כָּנָר, in Hebrew, signifying covering up as a cloak, or concealing the truth!

He laid down his life and suffered a cruel death in behalf of that truth which he had received from his Father and our Father. He taught the severing of the *dearest earthly ties as a duty* when they interfered with the life and word of God in the soul. The Jesuits have indeed slandered and vilified him in taking his name as authority for their most detestable creed!

The inquiry is a very important one: To what extent has Platonic philosophy corrupted the religion of Jesus? We have seen that in the interpretation of such a metaphorical language as the Hebrew or Chaldee, first into the Greek, then into the Latin, and finally into the vulgar tongues, how that the adding to or the withholding of a single word, or by rendering it into any other sense than its original intent, which may have had an entirely figurative and allegorical meaning. We have seen how primitive thought has been misrepresented, because misunderstood; the translator not having entered into the spirit of the original writer!

And that other question necessarily arises: How far were the fathers of the early Church influenced by the philosophy of Plato and the doctrines of the Eclectic school? Were their minds misled by Platonism? If so, to what extent?

Have they, as custodians and translators of the

thoughts of Jesus, been faithful to their high trust, or did they, in their anxiety that the true faith should supersede the philosophy of the schools, and finally clothe itself with the tiara of the imperial authority, they, as prelates, bishops, and divines, dispensing place, dominion, and power,—were they influenced by such considerations as these ?

This great inquiry has occupied the thought and claimed the attention of men distinguished alike for their attainments and virtue, from the times of Luther and Melancthon to George Fox, William Penn, and Elias Hicks. These enlightened minds have done much in elaborating the truths of the gospel. But much remains to be done. The harvest is indeed plentiful, but the laborers are few.

I am aware that some fear inquiry and investigation, but this is not in accordance with the precepts of Jesus: "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

Truth ever courts the light of day. Her mission is "to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the ways of peace !"

Because scoffers, and those whose minds are in that most pitiful of all conditions, a state of unbelief, shall we refuse to use the reason that a wise Creator has conferred, in investigating those things which pertain to the *stability and establishment of mind and thought?*—in those things that concern our spiritual well-being ?

All candid minds must admit that it is the false view that has been placed upon the nature and the mission of that faithful Son of the Highest, Jesus of Nazareth, that in *this day of light and knowledge* is making scoffers and infidels by tens of thousands.

## CHAPTER V.

Fathers of the Church—Samuel Comfort—Papias—Clement—Barnabas—Hermes—Standpoint of Justin—Revelation—Millennium—Millerism.

BEFORE entering upon this particular branch of inquiry, it is necessary, in a faithful revision of the Scriptures, to consider the question of the chronological order of the different books of the New Testament, and here we will find ourselves in the open light of day in comparison with the difficulties of a like task in the arrangement of the Old Testament.

For we have the advantage of the labors and the investigations of eminent and enlightened minds, who for a generation have given to the subject much laborious and critical thought.

First, we have the internal evidence presented by the different writers of the New Testament, the evangelists and the apostles. And secondly, we have much valuable testimony from the writings of the Fathers of the Church, who were as follows:

## APOSTOLIC FATHERS.

	A.D.
St. Barnabas . . . . .	
St. Clement, Bishop of Rome . . . . .	96
St. Hermas, brother to Pius, Bishop of Rome . . . . .	100
St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch . . . . .	
St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna .. . . .	

## FATHERS OF THE SECOND CENTURY.

A.D.

Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis . . . . .	116
Quadratus, an apologist . . . . .	119
Aristides, an Athenian philosopher and apologist . . . . .	121
Hegesippus, an ecclesiastical historian . . . . .	130
Justin Martyr . . . . .	140
Melito, Bishop of Sardis . . . . .	141
Apollinaris, apologist . . . . .	163
Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth . . . . .	167
Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch . . . . .	181
Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons . . . . .	182
Pantænus, Master of the Alexandrian School . . . . .	193
Clemens Alexandrinus . . . . .	194

## FATHERS OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

Tertullian, a priest of Carthage . . . . .	202
Minucius Felix . . . . .	210
Origen . . . . .	210
Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage . . . . .	243
Novatian, aspirant to the see of Rome . . . . .	248
Lucian, Presbyter of Antioch . . . . .	290

## FATHERS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY.

Peter, tenth Bishop of Alexandria . . . . .	300
Arnobius . . . . .	306
Lactantius . . . . .	316
Arius and his followers . . . . .	316
Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea . . . . .	316
Constantine, Emperor . . . . .	316
Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria . . . . .	326
Damascus, Pope of Rome . . . . .	370
Basil the Great, Bishop of Cæsarea . . . . .	370
Gregory Nazianzen . . . . .	371
Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa in Cappadocia . . . . .	371
Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan . . . . .	374
Jerome, Presbyter and Monk . . . . .	392
Augustine, Bishop of Hippo Regius, in Africa . . . . .	395
Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople . . . . .	398

On page 610 of the "Friends' Intelligencer," Samuel Comfort, in his journal, in speaking of the Scriptures, says, "This testimony of the apostle *before* the New Testament Scriptures were written, in which is set forth the superior excellence of the Christian religion, etc." Now, this is contrary to the chronological order of the books of the New Testament as given by King James's bishops. But, nevertheless, Samuel Comfort was right in saying that the Epistles were written *before* either of the Gospels.

In none of the Epistles do we find any quotation from, or direct reference to, the writings of either of the evangelists, nor in the Acts, nor in the Revelation, is any allusion made to them; though (as in Acts xx. 35) other sayings of Jesus are mentioned.

Church historians have much overrated the testimony of Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis (A.D. 116). He says "that Matthew composed his 'logia' (or *sayings*) in the Hebrew dialect, and every one *translated as he was able*." It seems that *he preferred* the traditions in regard to Jesus to that which was committed to writing; and says in regard to these traditions, which he treasured up in his memory, and which he has "recorded in order to give additional confirmation to the truth by my testimony."\*

Eusebius says of him, "The same historian also gives other accounts, which, he says, he adds as received by him from unwritten tradition; likewise certain strange parables of our Lord, and of his doctrine, and some other matters rather too fabulous."

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\* Eusebius, book iii. chap. xxxix.

None of the Fathers of the first century quote from, or allude to, the Gospels in their writings as we have them. Neither did they in those that were in existence at the time of the great Church historian, Eusebius (A.D. 316). If they had done so, he would, beyond all doubt, have referred to them, *as nothing of the kind escaped his attention!*

He refers to the epistles of Clement, Barnabas, and to the Pastor or Shepherd of Hermas (A.D. 100), which, in the time of Eusebius, was publicly read in the churches, and which *Origen held as divinely inspired*. The writings of Ignatius and Polycarp are also quoted in his history of the Church.

Justin is the first writer who quotes from or refers to the writings of the evangelists, except the few paragraphs which Eusebius has preserved from Papias. And here, for the first time, we seem to be treading on something like firm ground. Of the writings of Justin, we have his first and second Apology to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, and his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, which is quite lengthy.

In no other writings up to the time of Justin, either in the New Testament or in the records of the Fathers, have we *anything like a date affixed to an epistle, narrative, or history*.

In Justin's first Apology, he says, "We assert Christ to have been born one hundred and fifty years ago, under Cyrenius." Antoninus began his reign A.D. 138 and ended it A.D. 161,—a space of twenty-three years intervening.

The first Apology was written, as Justin says, about

A.D. 150, and all writers agree that the date of his second was at the close of the reign of Antoninus. The Dialogue was subsequent to either, as they are referred to in it.

The writings of this Father have justly acquired great importance in determining the order and the authority of the apostolic records, as he has quoted largely, not only from them, but also from the Old Testament. He has referred to the latter, it is estimated, over four hundred times, and to the former over two hundred, in his different works. The latter assertion must be received, however, with a grain of allowance, as no book of the New Testament is referred to by any title with which we are acquainted, except the Apocalypse, which he speaks of as a revelation to "a teacher of ours whose name was John."

Many passages as we have them in Matthew, Mark, and Luke are quoted, and also those of other writings of which we have no record. As, for instance, "The child, then, having been born in Bethlehem, when Joseph could find no place in the village where he might lodge, he put in a cave which was near the village; and when they were there, Mary brought forth the Christ."\* Again, "And then when Jesus came to the river Jordan, where John was baptizing, when he had gone down into the water, fire was kindled in the Jordan."† In other places, in quoting existing documents, he says, "But when he said, I am a worm, and no man; a re-

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\* Works of St. Justin the Martyr, p. 171.

† Ibid., p. 184.

proach of men, and an outcast of the people." And again, "When Jesus came to the Jordan, being thought to be the son of Joseph the carpenter, and having no comeliness, as the Scripture foretold, but being a carpenter, for he was used to follow the employment of a carpenter when among men, making plows and yokes, by which he taught both the tokens of righteousness *and activity of life.*"\*

In quoting from these writings, Justin refers to them as the "records of the apostles," and makes no mention of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. From the first three he frequently quotes passages familiar to us all, but refers to no text that can be recognized as coming from "the Gospel according to John."

This fact, in connection with others of like import, has led to the opinion that this latter Gospel was not written till during the latter part of the second century. Upon this subject Professor John Fiske, of Harvard College, says, in a recent article in the "Modern Thinker," "Now, if there is any one conclusion concerning the New Testament literature, which must be regarded as incontrovertibly established by the labors of a whole generation of scholars, it is this, that the fourth Gospel was utterly unknown till about A.D. 170; that it was written by some one who possessed very little direct knowledge of Palestine; that its purpose was rather to expound a dogma than to give an accurate record of events. It is not cited by Papias, and Justin, Marcian, and Valentinus make no allusion to

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\* Ibid., p. 185.

it, though, since it furnishes so much that is germane to their views. In the great quartodecimo controversy (A.D. 168) the Gospel is not only not mentioned, but the authority of John is cited by Polycrates in flat contradiction of the view as given in this Gospel."

It has been the opinion of many eminent divines and scholars that if Jesus taught as he did in Luke, he could not have taught as he did in John. Hence such minds as that distinguished theologian Bretschneider, a half a century ago, took the ground that this account of Jesus was *infinitely suspicious*. The thirty-first verse, chapter twenty, would destroy the authority of any book written in our day, announcing that it was indited for the purpose of making narrative and history subservient to dogma and definition !

This verse and the succeeding chapter have long been thought to be additions to the text; and if we compare Luke ix. 27 with John xxi. 23, we can plainly understand the comparatively modern date of the Gospel under consideration.

Both Papias and Justin recognize the Revelation as being the production of the Apostle John. Now, he could not have written this book, and also the fourth Gospel, for the reason that they proclaim entirely opposite views upon an important, and, in the estimation of the believers of the first century, a fundamental doctrine. For they held that the end of all things was near, and that soon in clouds of glory they should hail the Son of the Highest as the prince and deliverer of the elect !

In the Revelation, John distinctly announces, *and,*

throughout the whole book, holds to this opinion. He states these "things must shortly come to pass,"\* and, in Rev. xvii. 10, fixes the exact time. He commences and closes in language that startled the generation in which he lived: "*The time is at hand!*"†

As late as A.D. 160, Justin in his Dialogue with Trypho says, "If you have held converse with any who are called Christians, but do not confess this, and even presume to blaspheme the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; who say that there will be no resurrection of the dead, but as soon as they die their souls are taken up into heaven: do not imagine them to be Christians. I, and all Christians whose belief is in every respect correct, know that there will be both a resurrection of the flesh, and a thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be rebuilt, adorned, and enlarged, as the prophets Ezekiel, Isaiah, and others declare."

Two centuries later, when this idea had become quite faint by the lapse of time, and when doubt was even thrown upon the authorship of the Apocalypse, which was written not long after the fall of Jerusalem, A.D. 70, Eusebius thus expresses himself in regard to Papias: "In those days, he says, there would be a certain millennium after the resurrection, and that there will be a corporeal reign of Christ on this very earth; which things he appears to have imagined, not understanding those things which were mystically propounded. For he was limited in his comprehension, as is evident from his discourses."

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\* Rev. i. 1.

† Rev. i. 3; Rev. xxii. 10.

That the early Fathers were millenarians, is beyond all doubt. And that the apocalyptic views, as recorded as of Jesus, were literally understood by the evangelists and the apostles, notwithstanding his declaration, "Neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." They comprehended him not while he lived, as, for instance, Luke x. 37. And after his demise it required the second-sight of a centurion of the Italian band to open Peter's eyes to the *plainest proposition!*

That Matthew,\* Mark,† Luke,‡ John,§ Peter,|| James,¶ and even Paul,\*\* unless his epistles have been much corrupted, held apocalyptic ideas, their writings clearly evince. But I deny the inference of some writers, that Jesus was under this illusion,†† and that the kingdom of God which he taught was *understood by him* in any other than a spiritual sense. His followers misunderstood and misrepresented, and as a necessary consequence have conveyed an improper understanding of, *words that were intended* to transmit only a metaphorical and allegorical meaning.

In this very particular, of a millennium of a thousand years, they have blended the Pythagorean doctrine of metempsychosis, which Plato taught, and which the Eclectic school held, with the simple faith that he in-

\* Matt. xxiv. 36.

† Mark xiii. 4.

‡ Luke xvii. 24.

§ Rev. entire.

|| 1 Peter i. 3; 2 Peter iii. 7, 8, 9, 10.

¶ James v. 3, 8.

\*\* 1 Thess. i. 8, 9; 1 Thess. iii. 13; 1 Thess. iv. 14; 2 Thess. ii. 1, 3; 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24, 52; 1 Cor. i. 7, 8.

†† See Renan's Life of Jesus.

culcated. As an evidence of which, I will again quote Justin, and he is certainly one of the most enlightened of the Fathers. He says in his apology to the emperor : " Briefly, then, what we look for and have learned from Christ, and what we teach, is as follows: Plato said to the same effect, that Rhadamanthus and Minos would punish the wicked when they came to them; we say the same will take place."

Now the Pythagorean\* millennium, or metempsychosis, that Plato believed in, was just one thousand years, and by the nations of antiquity a sacred meaning was attached to this term. The Chinese are now (1871), with great pomp throughout their empire, celebrating the expiration, according to their chronology, of this era.

All must agree that Jesus was misrepresented by his cotemporaries, and by those who came after them, in regard to this subject, which engrossed so much of the feeling and attention of the first century of the Church, and which exerted a powerful influence in advancing the new religion, appealing, as it did, in so striking a manner to the fears of the people.

Those who witnessed the exciting scenes of Millerism in 1843, can appreciate the power of the Syriac words, " Maran atha," our Lord is coming! used as they were by eloquent and devoted men, fired with a

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\* Pythagoras, B.C. 586, but reflected the tenth Avatar, which all Hindoo prophecies announce, that is, the return of Christna upon the earth, and in a conflict with Rackchasas, disguised as a horse, that he finally will succeed in *forever limiting* this evil one's domain to the infernal regions.

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## CHAPTER VI.

Honest and Just Critical Test—Is the Bible the Word of God?—  
Genealogy—Geography—Statistics—Dates.

IN a cursory examination of these writings, we detect flagrant errors in the genealogy, in the geography of the country described, in the statistics, the dates, and in the diverse accounts given in the different books of events and circumstances in the life of Jesus.

But I hear some reader exclaiming, Handle not in so irreverent a manner the "Word of God." I reply that it must be kept in mind that this book is dedicated to a religious Society, who do not believe in infallible books, nor in infallible men!—who believe, not in an external, but in an INTERNAL WORD, that in the language of Scripture is "*the word that is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart.*"

The Bible nowhere claims to proceed from divine inspiration. It professes to be only what it is, a history of current events, and its different writers often proceed upon the inference that their matter is in a very imperfect condition.

Those who may feel hurt by the critical test to which I shall subject what they call "the Word of God," must remember that I stated in the preface of this book that I held nothing sacred and holy but the

highest. In the language of Jesus, "There is none good but one; that is God." TRUTH *is the only august SON of the DIVINE FATHER of us all!* Jesus so understood it in his dying declaration to Pilate, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

As that honest man, accomplished scholar, and faithful minister of the word, John Jackson, says, in his "Dissertation on the Christian Ministry" (p. 91), "These facts prove that the Bible is not the inspired and infallible word of God; for the word of God is perfect, and admits of no emendation. A new translation of the Bible must be left to *science*; for so long as it is intrusted to the clergy, no improvement or advance will be likely to be made."

In the crucible of science, then, let us proceed to test the Scripture narrative, and by an *honest, just, and friendly criticism* seek to eliminate the pure gold of TRUTH, and to cast off the dross of error that has for so many centuries disfigured and dishonored the religion that Jesus taught to the people.

Truth is always in the kernel, as a grain of wheat in a bushel of chaff. The golden grain is to be found only by diligence and research. There is no royal road to knowledge or virtue.

The Gospels were written by fallible men, just as liable to erroneous statement and opinion as we in this our day. Human nature was the same eighteen hundred years ago, in Alexandria and Judea, as in this present era of time. Men perverted, distorted, and concealed the truth then in order to obtain cur-

rency for their counterfeit coin, just as they now do every day at Oxford and Rome!

GENEALOGY.

The genealogies of Jesus are irreconcilable. In Matthew, Joseph's father is Jacob, Jacob's Matthan, Matthan's Eleazar. In Luke, Joseph was the son of Heli, Heli of Matthat, Matthat of Levi, Levi of Melchi, etc. The fifty-six ancestors as rendered by Luke cannot be reconciled with the forty-two different ancestors in the genealogy of the same Abraham given by Matthew. Neither can the forty generations enumerated by Matthew, ending chap. i. 16, be the same as those given in the *next verse*, numbering the forty-second from Abraham.

GEOGRAPHY.

"But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee, and he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene." (Matt. ii. 22.)

Now, the son of Herod reigned in Galilee as well as in Judea, and his power was the same in the one province as the other. It was impossible for him to have traveled from Egypt to Nazareth and not have gone through the extent of Archelaus's kingdom, unless he made a tour through the deserts north of Lake Asphaltites. He was a Nazarene, and was born at Bethlehem. No prophet predicted that "he should be called a Naz-

arene:" all admit this account to be unhistorical. The *rapeutæ* has the same signification as Nazarene.\* Some of the Eclectic school of Alexandria have simply thought to claim him as one of their sect.

"He came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis." (Mark vii. 31.) Now, there were no coasts of Decapolis, nor was the name known before the reign of Nero.

"He departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea, beyond Jordan" (Matt. xix. 1): when the Jordan itself was the eastern boundary of Judea, and there were no coasts of Judea beyond it.

"He departed into Galilee, and leaving Nazareth came and dwelt at Capernaum" (Matt. iv. 13): as though Nazareth was not in Galilee, as Capernaum was. One might say with equal propriety, "He departed into Philadelphia, and, leaving Chestnut Street, came and dwelt in Walnut Street." Matt. iv. 15 is still more ungeographical. No resident of Judea could have made such *awkward* geography. The pen of the Greek is evident.

#### STATISTICS.

"Search and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet" (John vii. 52): when the most distinguished of the Jewish prophets, Nahum and Jonah, were Galileans.

"Caiaphas was the high-priest that same year" (John

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\* Epiphanius. Christians are so called at this day in Mohammedan countries.—Renan.

x. 49), "being high-priest that year, he prophesied" (John xi. 51). A Jew would not have been ignorant that the high-priest's office was not an annual office, and that prophesying was not in their line of duty.

"Annas and Caiaphas being the high-priests" (Luke iii. 2): when any Jew, or one conversant with Jewish polity, would have known that there never was more than one high-priest at a time, any more than the Catholics have but one pope. In explanation of this text it is alleged that Hanan, the deposed priest, was still living.

DATES.

"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed; and this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria." (Luke ii. 1, 2.)

Now, there was no general taxation in the time of Augustus that the annals of Rome mention, and Judea was not at the time a Roman province. The assessment under Quinenius, which the legend connects the journey to Bethlehem, is subsequent by at least ten years to the time when, according to Matthew and Luke, Jesus was born. Josephus states it was not till ten years after Herod's death.

Cyrenius was not governor of Syria till twelve years after the time assigned to the birth of Jesus.

"There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices." (Luke xiii. 1.) No historian makes the least allusion to this. It was entirely out of keeping with the character of the age, some cotem-

poraneous writer would at least have mentioned such an act of barbarity.

These fabulous accounts were doubtless taken from the apocryphal Gospels, which were much in circulation as pious frauds upon the credulity of the age. For after the destruction of Jerusalem, we must remember, the custodians and translators of the life and history of Jesus were not generally residents of Judea, and were prepared, in consequence of their habits of thought, for fables, marvels, and miraculous events, and there has always been a supply when a market exists for such wares!

## CHAPTER VII.

St. Barnabas—St. Hermes—Robert Barclay's View—Polycarp—Papias—Irenæus—Quadratus—Aristides—Æsculapius—Hegesippus—Justin.

BEFORE entering into the consideration of the formation of the Gospels, let us examine a little the character and tendencies of mind and thought of the Fathers of the first century, and I will subjoin a few extracts from their works, which are not commonly given by ecclesiastical writers, who most generally are of the clergy, and who therefore have an interest in misleading the popular mind. To this, however, there are honorable exceptions.

St. Barnabas, Bishop of Milan, is first in order, and his epistle, from Archbishop Wake's translation, which has been quoted frequently by such writers as Paley and Addison.

"Understand therefore, my children, these things more fully, that Abraham, who was the first that brought in circumcision, looking forward in the spirit to Jesus crucified, received the mystery of three letters; for the Scriptures says, that Abraham circumcised three hundred and eighteen of his house. But what, therefore, was the mystery that was made known unto him? Mark first the eighteen, and next the three hundred: for the numerical letters of *ten* and *eight* are IH, and

these denote Jesus; and because the cross was that whereby we find grace, therefore he adds *three hundred*, the note of which is T; wherefore by two letters he signifies *Jesus*, and by the third his cross.”\*

“He who put the engrafted gift of his doctrine within us, knows that I never taught any more certain truth than this; but I trust that ye are worthy of it.”

“Consider how God hath joined both the cross and the water together; for thus he saith, Blessed are they who put their trust in the cross, and descended into the water.”†

“Jesus Christ is the heifer; the wicked men who were to offer it, were those sinners who brought him to death.”‡

Barnabas had evidently been a Sun devotee; miracles were not necessary for him; he no doubt had belonged to that class whose credulity was so great that they were ready to embrace any new doctrine. He, however, got the monogram of the Sun worshipers, I.H.S., a little transposed. These letters have been falsely supposed to stand for Jesus Hominum Salvator; but they have been found on ancient temples inscribed to the mythology of Greece. They are identical with the Greek letters *YHE*, or Sol,—the sun. It was, no doubt, in consequence of some of his heathenish ideas that induced Paul to separate from him at Pamphylia.

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\* Barnabas's Catholic Epistle, Archbishop Wake's translation, p. 176.

† Ibid., p. 180.

‡ Ibid., p. 169.

The Pastor or Shepherd of St. Hermes, Bishop of Philippopolis, was held by Origen to be divinely inspired, and was read in the churches in his time. I have copied the whole fourth chapter of the second book from Archbishop Wake's translation :\*

"1. Moreover, the angel said unto me, Love the truth, and let all the speech be true which proceeds out of thy mouth, that the spirit which the Lord hath given to dwell in thy flesh may be found true towards all men, and the Lord be glorified, who hath given such a spirit unto thee ;

"2. Because God is true in all his words, and in him there is no lie.

"3. They, therefore, that lie, deny the Lord, and become robbers of the Lord, not rendered to God what they receive from him.

"4. For they receive the spirit free from lying ; if, therefore, they make *that* a liar, they defile what was committed to them by the Lord, and become deceivers.

"5. When I heard this, I wept bitterly ; and when the angel saw me weeping, he said unto me, Why weepest thou ?

"6. And I said, Because, sir, I doubt whether I can be saved.

"7. He asked me, Wherefore ?

"8. I replied, Because, sir, I never spake a true word in my life, but always lived in dissimulation, and affirmed a lie for a truth to all men, and no man contradicted me, but all gave credit to my word ;

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\* Acts xv. 39.

"9. How, then, can I live, seeing I have done in this manner?

"10. And the angel said unto me, Thou thinkest well and truly ;

"11. For thou oughtest, as the servant of God, to have walked in the truth, and not have joined an evil conscience with the spirit of truth, nor have grieved the holy and true spirit of God.

"12. And I replied unto him, Sir, I never before hearkened so diligently unto these things.

"13. He answered me, *Now* thou hearest them, take care from henceforth that even those things which thou hast formerly spoken falsely for the *sake of thy business* may by thy present truth *receive credit*.

"14. *For even those things may be credited*, if, for the time to come, thou shalt speak the truth ; and by so doing thou mayest attain unto life.

"15. And whosoever shall hearken unto this command, and do it, and shall depart from all lying, he shall live unto God."

The reader can make his own comment upon this extract from "St. Hermes." I will but state that for years I have been of the opinion that *many* passages in the New Testament can be traced to the forging hand of such men as this Bishop of Philippopolis. To the following quotations I invite *careful examination*, for they are generally not germane to the text, and seem clearly to be interpolations. They are certainly contrary to the general spirit and teachings of the great apostle. Rom. iii. 7; 2 Cor. xi. 8; 1 Cor. i. 28, compare with 1 Cor. xiv. 15; the first is an evident interpolation.

2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. That 1 Tim. iii. 16, and other such passages, *are quite modern forgeries*, such men as Sir Isaac Newton and Rev. Albert Barnes have declared.

Can we not say with Robert Barclay,\* "By the infinite labors of which kind of men, intermixing *their heathenish stuff*, the Scriptures is rendered at this day of so little service to the simple people, whereof Jerome complained in his time, now twelve hundred years ago"?

In the texts above given the most obnoxious sentiments are foisted upon that whole-hearted, generous, and devoted servant, the apostle to the Gentiles. We have, as from him, falsehood, lying, and the grossest and most palpable absurdities, which, from a laborious and critical examination of his writings, I believe are forgeries and interpolations,—that they were *not* the sentiments of Paul, but that they, and *many other such views*, had been put upon him by such men as Barnabas, Hermes, and Papias, probably to extenuate and palliate crime and peculation in the early Church.

That the age was rife with "*pious frauds*," we very well know. Robert Barclay,† who is so often quoted as a father of our Society, cites Epiphanius: "*That the Catholics blotted it out*" (certain passages of Luke), "*fearing lest heretics should abuse it. Other fathers also declare*" (says he) "*that whole verses were taken out of Mark, because of the Manichees.*"

Three hundred years ago, what are now known to

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\* Apology, p. 89.

† Apology, p. 85.

us as egregious and monkish follies and forgeries, were generally believed by the multitude, — the Veronica handkerchief story, for instance, from which many a painter drew his inspiration. It professed that an exact likeness of “our Saviour” was left upon a handkerchief on which he chanced to wipe his face.

To have denied the authenticity of the letter from Jesus to King Agbarus, as given by Eusebius, would have cost one his life five hundred years since. At that time, not only this, but the testimony of Pilate, the Sibylline Oracles, the Anaphora, or the relation of Pilate to Tiberius, in Greek, all passed current as undoubted truth, although Matt. xxvii. 53 was not altogether corroborated by this Gospel. In it Pilate relates to the emperor those wonderful pyrotechnics. He says, “Early in the morning of the first Sabbaths, the resurrection of Christ was announced by a display of the most astonishing and surprising feats of Divine Omnipotence ever performed. At the third hour of the night the sun broke forth into such splendor as was never before seen, and the heavens became enlightened seven times more than on any other day. And the light ceased not to shine all that night.” The finale to the account was that “an instantaneous chasm took place, the earth opened, and all the unbelieving Jews, their temple, and their synagogues were swallowed, and vanished from sight.”

To have smiled at this wonderful story in the times of the Inquisition would have been dangerous indeed.

Polycarp, A. D. 108, was cotemporaneous with Hermas. His whole existence seems problematic,

though Eusebius gives a long account of him, and such writers as Joseph John Gurney cite him.

It seems strange that in that age of universal toleration, under the philosophical emperor Antoninus, that a peaceful old man, in his eighty-sixth year, should have suffered a cruel death by fire; though we are informed that HEROD\* was an actor in the scene. The historian gravely informs us of the great miracle that attended his execution: the wind "formed a wall around the body of the martyr, and he was in the midst not like burning flesh, but like gold and silver purified in the furnace." His executioners, finding that he could not be burned to death, "plunged a sword into him, and, when this was done, such a quantity of blood gushed forth that the fire was extinguished."† Polycarp left no writings behind him for citation.

Ignatius is mentioned also by Joseph John Gurney‡ as having lived with Polycarp in Asia; he mentions the Gospels and Epistles of this Father, though for some reason he does not quote from them, though they are perfectly authentic, and have been translated and collected by Archbishop Wake. The following is from chapter xix.:

"Now the virginity of Mary, and he who was born of her, was kept secret from the prince of this world,

\* This is not the same who, in a population of 14,000, massacred *all the children under two years*. How unfortunate that, in so enlightened an epoch, no historian recounts this inhuman act! Tacitus is silent, though he usually is eloquent in condemnation of crime.

† Eusebius, p. 148.

‡ Evidences of Christianity, p. 10.

as also was the death of our Lord: three of the mysteries most spoken of throughout the world, yet done in secret by God."

"Behold, I have heard of some who say, Unless I find it in the ancients, I will not believe in the gospel. And I said unto them, It is written. They answered me, It is not mentioned. But to me instead of all ancients is Jesus Christ, and the uninterpolated *antiquities* are his cross, and his death and his resurrection, and the faith which is by him." This last extract is taken from Dr. Lardner's "Christian Evidences," and is from Wake's translation.

There is also an "epistle of the blessed Ignatius to the holy virgin Mary, mother of our Lord Jesus Christ," and also "the blessed virgin's answer" extant. But, as this epistle was not discovered till the year 1495 at Paris, it probably is not authentic.

Papias has been alluded to. He had faith in miracles, and narrates a circumstance in the life of Barnabas, how he drank deadly poison, "and by the grace of the Lord suffered no harm."

Irenæus preserved some of his writings. The following is a specimen, which Papias said that he had from St. John himself: "The Lord taught and said that the days shall come in which vines shall spring up, each having ten thousand branches, and each shall bear ten thousand arms, and each arm of a branch ten thousand tendrils, and on each tendril ten thousand bunches, and on each bunch ten thousand grapes, and each grape, on being pressed, shall yield five-and-twenty gallons of wine; and when any of the saints

shall take hold of one of these bunches, another shall cry out, 'I am a better bunch; take me, and bless the Lord *by me*.' "

In reference to Quadratus and Aristides, the reader can consult the History of Eusebius. They held very outward views of Jesus, and they had, in all probability, been but recently devotees at the shrine of the Grecian gods. From the testimony of the historian, in regard to Quadratus in the extract from his writings, the term "Our Saviour" would apply equally well to the Grecian divinity Æsculapius, for such was his title!\*

It was of this divinity that Socrates, with his last words, spoke: "Remember, we owe Æsculapius a cock." This bird and the serpent were consecrated to this divinity, for such he was esteemed by the Greeks. Though we must not fall into the error of supposing that such an *enlightened man* as Socrates looked upon this debt in any other light than as a tax due by him to support existing usages.

As few of the writings of Hegesippus are now in

\* The worship of Æsculapius was established at Rome some three centuries B.C. Dr. Lardner, vol. iv. p. 410, in a quotation of heathen authorities, has shown temples were inscribed to him as THE SAVIOUR. Bryant's Annot., vol. ii. p. 406, 195, shows that coins have been found on which was the designation of HERCULES THE SAVIOUR.

In treating of the heathen divinities, Dr. Parkhurst, in his Lexicon, says, "I find myself obliged to refer Tammuz, as well as the Greek and Roman Hercules, to that class of idols which was originally designed to represent the promised Saviour, the Desire of all nations. His other name, Adonis, is almost the very Hebrew אֲדֹנָי, Our Lord, a well-known title of Christ." The reader will bear in mind that Dr. Parkhurst is one of the most orthodox authorities.

existence. Justin Martyr is next in order as a "Father of the Church," and, as Joseph John Gurney justly says, "he is a very important person." I wish, however, that friend Gurney would have given the extract which I append, and I think that his "Christian Evidences" would have presented more fairly to his readers Justin's real sentiments, and the "carnal" view, to use an expression of George Fox, that he had of the nature and character of Jesus of Nazareth.

And how that true Son of God—I use this term in the Hebrew and not in the Greek sense—was transformed into "Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" by Greeks and those who had been but recently worshippers at the shrines of the heathen divinities; *who, in order to satisfy the craving for new gods*, presented to the world the son of Joseph and Mary in that capacity. And I am firm in the belief that were he again to visit this scene of mutability, that a spirit of just indignation would be stirred within him, and scornfully as of yore would he characterize such blasphemy: "YE FOOLS AND BLIND!"

21. The following is the extract from Justin, from his first Apology to Antoninus: "And when we say that the Word, who is the first-begotten of God, and our Master Jesus Christ, was born without sexual union, and that he was crucified, and died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven, we introduce nothing different to that which you say of those whom you call the sons of Jupiter; for you are aware how many sons of Jupiter of repute among you assign to him; *M* interpreting word and the teacher of all;

Æsculapius also, who, as being the healer of diseases, was struck by a thunderbolt, and ascended into heaven; Bacchus, who was torn to pieces; Hercules, who committed himself to the flames to escape his sufferings; and the Dioscuri, sons of Leda; and Perseus, the son of Danæ; and Bellerophon, the son of human parents, on his horse Pegasus; and what shall I say of Ariadne, and those who, like her, are said to have been placed among the stars? And why do you always think right to deify your departed emperors, and produce one to swear that he saw Cæsar ascend to heaven from his funeral pile? Nor is it necessary for me to recount to you, who know them already, what kind of actions are ascribed to each of those who are termed the sons of Jupiter; except they are said to have corrupted and ruined your youth, for every one thinks it good to be an imitator of the gods. But be such a thought of the gods far from every pure mind, to suppose that Jupiter himself, whom they make the chief father of all, was both a parricide and the son of a parricide, and when overcome by the lust of base and shameful pleasures he descended upon Ganymede, and the many women whom he debauched, and that his sons committed the like actions. But, as I said before, the evil demons have done these things. We, however, have been taught that they only will attain to immortality who lead holy and virtuous lives like God; and we believe that all who live wickedly, and do not repent, will be punished in eternal fire.

22. "But the Son of God, who is called Jesus, even if only and merely man, is worthy for his wisdom of

being called the Son of God ; for all your writers term God the father both of men and of gods ; and if we affirm that the Word, who is of God, was begotten of God even in a peculiar manner and beyond the ordinary generation, as I have already said, let this be common to you who affirm Hermes to be the messenger-word from God ; and should any object that Christ was crucified, I maintain that this was also common, according to you, to the forementioned sons of Jupiter, who underwent suffering. In their case, indeed, the sufferings of death are not recorded to have been similar, but different. So that he appears not to be behind them even in his peculiar manner of suffering ; nay, I will prove, as I have undertaken to do in the previous part of my defence, that he was even their superior in this respect, or rather as I have already done ; for he who is the superior shows it by his actions. But if we affirm that he was born of a virgin, you also may take this as held in common of Perseus ; and when we declare that he made the lame, paralytic, and the blind from their birth whole, and that he raised the dead to life, even the like actions to those which are said to have been done by Æsculapius may we be thought to assert of him.”\*

We see that, after all, this “important person” was an “Eclectic” or “Liberal,” from the word *liber*, which in ancient times had an especial meaning to *sacred things*. It was used in connection with the divinity Adoneus, or the lord and giver of light. He

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\* Justin's Works, p. 16.

was from Osiris, a god of Egypt, and he probably from Chrishna, a Hindoo divinity.

Justin makes no concealment that he was a philosophical vagrant, or liberal. He says that he first put himself "under the tuition of a Stoic, and then went to Peripatetic;"\* "but, my mind *still hankering* after whatever was *peculiar* and valuable in philosophy, I joined a very celebrated Pythagorean." This he soon left and joined the school of Plato. "The Platonic conception of incorporeals," he says, "greatly captivated me, and their theory of ideas added wings to my thoughts."†

He believed in the pagan sign of the cross, and traced it back to Moses, whose idea he gives: "If you look upon that figure and believe, you shall be saved." "Plato then read this," he continues, "and not knowing accurately or perceiving that it was a figure of the cross, but seeing only the form of the letter  $\chi$ , he said that the power next to the first god was in the universe in the shape of a  $\chi$ ; and his mention of a third is derived, as I have already said, from the words of Moses."‡

In cosmogony he is also an eclectic, and says, "So both Plato and those who agree with him, and we ourselves, have learned, and you may be persuaded, that by the word of God (or Logos) the whole world was created from subject matter."§

It is highly probable that *the school of Justin*, at a

\* Justin, p. 72.

† Numb. xxi. 8.

‡ Ibid., p. 73.

§ Justin, p. 45.

later period, helped compile the fourth Gospel. *Some* of the materials, or *some* component part of them, for there is much in the *narrative that is truly valuable and interesting*, were no doubt from some traditions of the apostle: hence the title "*according to John*."

Had this Gospel been in existence, Justin\* would undoubtedly *have cited it*, for he quotes everything, pagan and Christian, which has any possible bearing in elucidating his subject. He was no doubt familiar with the writings of the pagan philosopher whom Amelius referred to, and which illustrates the preface to the fourth Gospel. He says, in regard to Mercury or the Logos,† "*And this was plainly the Word by whom all things were made, he himself being eternal, as Heraclitus also would say; and, by Jove, the same whom the barbarian affirms to have been in the dignity of a principal, and to be with God and to be God, by whom all things were made, and in whom everything that was made has its life and being—who descended into a body and, putting on flesh, took the appearance of a man; though even then he gave proof of the majesty of his nature; nay, and after his dissolution he was deified again.*"

Justin tells us what such evangelical writers as J. J. Gurney carefully keep out of sight; that the early Church were by no means unanimous in placing Jesus upon the pedestal of some *overthrown heathen god*.

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\* Justin says that the teachings of Jesus were "short and concise, for he was not a literary man."

† Eusebius, Pr. Ev., l. xi. cap. xix. p. 540.

He says,\* "There are some of our profession who confess him to be the Christ, but consider him as a man† and the son of men, with whom I do not agree." He also denounces, in round terms, "Marcionites, some Valentinians, Basilidians, and others by other names, each getting his name from the leader of his heresy."

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\* Justin, p. 129.

† The Christian world degenerated after Justin's day, for Michelet has shown that in Europe for ten or twelve centuries, God the Father had no temple and no altar. The Holy Ghost and the Son of Mary were worshiped, and in the thirteenth century the First Person began to appear at the side of his Son, in pictures and sculpture, for worship, but only through the favor of his Son. These mortifying puerilities abound in history; and not a few of them are to be seen at the present day. Consider well, O Reader, have they any place in thy heart? If so, send not thy money to convert the heathen in distant climes; but turn with thine own soul, and let the divine light of God's free grace extirpate idolatry therein!

## CHAPTER VIII.

Joseph John Gurney—Tatian—Progress of the Gospels.

J. J. GURNEY,\* in speaking of the Gospels published by Tatian, A.D. 170, is very unfortunate in his authority, as Irenæus expressly denounces him as a heretic, and calls his "doctrine horrible;" says that he† "abuses Paul the apostle, and sets aside his epistles; neither do they receive the Acts of the Apostles. They have," he says, "the Diatessaron; that is, the gospel by the four, or the gospel formed of the four, which is in the possession of some even now. It is said also that he dared to alter certain expressions of the apostles, in order to correct the composition of the phrase." Irenæus also finds fault with him that he makes "Moses more ancient than all the celebrated writers among the Greeks."

Jesus, we know, left nothing behind him. As to his followers, they universally believed that the end was near. Of course they did not write for *a posterity that they did not expect*; nor had they the *faintest idea* that the name of Jesus would, in the course of time and from the force of circumstances, become a great power in the world, conferring prestige and renown

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\* Gurney's Lectures, p. 11.

† Eusebius, book iv. c. xxix.

upon humble mechanics and the sons of the fisherman of Galilee.

Hence nothing was written by the early believers before the fall of Jerusalem, except it may be a few scant memoirs that had been committed to writing by some of the friends and companions of Jesus, and their names may have been Matthew, Mark, and Luke ; for a name at the commencement of such documents does not mean much.

That the "*Logia*," or sayings, in existence eighty or ninety years after Jesus, were very little esteemed, we have the *positive testimony* of Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, and that the *traditions* were much more valuable to him than the written account.

We have also the testimony of *that wonderfully well-informed man*, Justin Martyr, that no documents bearing the names of Matthew, Mark, or Luke were in existence. He quotes from documents which he calls the "*records of the apostles*," and speaks of the Revelation of John as foretelling\* "*that those who believe in our Christ should pass a thousand years in Jerusalem ; and that after that there should be a universal and, in a word, an eternal resurrection of all men together, and then the judgment.*"

Judging from the quotations which he has given in his works, if they be uninterpolated, the gospel narrative must have made great progress in the process of formation, and they were in a much more advanced

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\* Justin, p. 176.

condition than when Papias made so light of them forty or fifty years before.

Thus we see that they *gradually* accumulated, for in Justin's time *no special authorship* was attached to them; but they began to assume form and authority; for the religion that was taught in the name of Jesus now seemed of *more importance* in the world, and the end of all things *did not seem so near*.

Philosophers were addressing emperors in the hope of converting them to the new faith, and the people were getting tired of their old divinities; they wanted something new and startling.\* Even such philosophers as Justin considered himself confessed this "*hankering*." And as for the priests, they were always ready to adopt new fashions in regard to their gods. It was the custom of the age and time.

That the synoptic gospels are "according" to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, is all *they profess*, and *all* writers place them at a comparatively distant period from the death of Jesus. We have seen that they were not known to the apostles, or they would not have failed to have quoted from them.

That they were not written till after the siege of Jerusalem, A. D. 70, was considered quite demonstrable centuries ago, from the fact that the gospel narrative mentions Zachariah as having been slain between the temple and the altar. Now, no such detail is given in all the annals of the Jews, except by Josephus, chap. v. p. 349, who states that Zachariah was thus killed

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\* Acts xvii. 21.

by the faction of Zelotes at the siege of Jerusalem. It is an outrage upon our reason to suppose that Jesus *could* have used the language attributed to him in Luke xi. 51, and in Matt. xxiii. 35. It is entirely out of keeping with the *wisdom of his character*, and is evidently the language of some friend or relation of the murdered Zachariah, who was killed under circumstances of great atrocity in a place of refuge that had always been considered *holy*. It was a circumstance unparalleled in all Jewish history.

The siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the son of the emperor Vespasian, in the year 70, was an event that should be fixed in the mind, for it exerted a powerful influence not only in the diffusion but also on the character of the religion promulgated in the name of Jesus. Eusebius says in his history, in speaking of this event, "The apostles were harassed in innumerable ways and driven from the land of Judea." We find bishoprics in the first century established at Rome, at Antioch, at Smyrna; and Eusebius informs us that early as the year 62 "Annianus succeeded Mark in the administration at Alexandria."

## CHAPTER IX.

Sadducees—Pharisees—Essenes—Chapter xvii. from Eusebius—  
Philo.

THE condition of the religious world contemporaneous with Jesus must be understood in estimating the influences which were antagonistic, or in some degree harmonious, with the new faith. Upon this subject much has been written by many eminent and learned men; but, supposing that some of my readers are not conversant with the history of the first era of the Church, I will devote some space to its consideration.

To the Sadducees and the Pharisees frequent mention has been made in the New Testament; but of that other important sect in Judea, and which had also their establishments in other countries bordering on the Mediterranean, little has been said. But Josephus and Philo have given us many interesting details respecting the Essenian brotherhood, particularly the latter, who was a cotemporary of Jesus, and one of the most accomplished and voluminous writers of antiquity. He was born in Egypt a few years before our era, and was honored with most important political trusts by the Jews, and, in consequence of their persecutions, was sent on an embassy to Caligula to de-

fend that people against the calumnies of Apion. He was of a philosophical turn of mind, and his writings exercised a wide influence in the world. In them, however, he makes no mention, and seems to have had no knowledge, either of the founder or of the faith that was cotemporaneous with him, which was in three short centuries after him destined to ascend the throne of the Cæsars. The following is the entire chapter which Eusebius renders from Philo concerning the Therapeutæ:

#### “CHAPTER XVII.

“The account given by Philo respecting the Ascetics of Egypt.

“THE same author, in the reign of Claudius, is also said to have had familiar conversation with Peter at Rome while he was proclaiming the gospel to the inhabitants of that city. Nor is this at all improbable, since the work of which we now speak, and which was subsequently composed at a late period, evidently comprehends the regulations that are still observed in our churches even to the present day; but at the same time that he describes with the greatest accuracy the lives of our ascetics, he evidently shows that he not only knew but approved, whilst he extolled and revered, the apostolic men of his time, who were sprung probably from the Hebrews, and hence still continuing to observe their most ancient customs, rather after the Jewish manner. In the book that he wrote ‘On a Contemplative Life, or those who lead a Life of Prayer,’ he avers indeed that he would add nothing contrary to


the truth, or of his own invention, in the history that he was about to write, when he says that these persons are called Therapeutæ, and the women Therapeutides.

“Subjoining the reason of such an appellation, he refers its origin either to the fact that, like physicians, by removing the evil affections they healed and cured the minds of those that joined them, or to their pure and sincere mode of serving and worshiping the Deity. Whether Philo himself attached this name to them of his own accord, giving an epithet well suited to the manner of the people, or whether the founders really so called themselves from the beginning, as the name of Christians was not yet spread to every place, are points that need not be so accurately determined. He bears witness, however, that they renounced their property, saying that ‘as soon as they commenced a philosophical life, they divested themselves of their property, giving it up to their relatives; then, laying aside all cares of life they abandoned the city and took up their abode in solitary fields and gardens, well knowing that the intercourse with persons of a different character is not only unprofitable but injurious.’ There was at this time, in all probability, persons who, under the influence of an inspired and ardent faith, instituted this mode of life in imitation of the ancient prophets. Wherefore, as it is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, a book well authenticated, that all the associates of the apostles, after selling their possessions and substance, distributed to all according to the necessity of each one, so that there is none in want

among them. 'For as many as had lands and houses,' as the account says, 'selling them, brought the value of the property sold and laid it at the apostles' feet, so as to distribute to each one according to his necessity.' Philo, giving his testimony to facts very much like these, in the same description superadds the following statements: 'This kind of men is everywhere scattered over the world, for both Greeks and barbarians should share in so permanent a benefit. They abound, however, in Egypt in each of its districts, and particularly about Alexandria.


" 'But the principal men among them, from every quarter, emigrate to a place situated on a moderate elevation of land beyond the Lake Maria, very advantageously located both for safety and temperature of the air, as if it were the native country of the Therapeutæ.' After thus describing what kind of habitations they have, he speaks thus of the *churches* of the place: 'In every house there is a sacred apartment, which they call the Semnæum or Monasterium, where, retired from men, they perform the mysteries of a pious life. Hither they bring nothing with them; neither food nor drink, nor anything else requisite to the necessities of the body; they only bring the law and the inspired declarations of the prophets and hymns, and such things by which piety may be augmented and perfected.' After other matters, he adds, 'The whole time between the morning and evening is a constant exercise; for, as they are engaged with the sacred Scriptures, they reason and comment upon them, explaining the philosophy of their country in an alle-

gorical manner. For they consider the verbal interpretation as signs indicative of a secret sense communicated by an obscure intimation. They have also commentaries of ancient men, who, as the founders of the sect, have left many monuments of their doctrine in allegorical representation, which they use as certain models, imitating the manner of the original institutions.' These facts appear to have been stated by a man who, at least, has paid attention to those who have expounded the sacred writings. But it is highly probable that the ancient commentaries, which he says they have, are the very gospels and writings of the apostles, and probably some expositions of the ancient prophets, such as are contained in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and many other of St. Paul's epistles. Afterwards, again, concerning the new Psalms, which they composed, he thus writes: 'Thus they not only pass their time in meditation, but compose songs and hymns unto God, noting them of necessity with measure uncommonly serious through every variety of meters and tunes.' Many other things concerning these persons he writes in the same book. But these it appears necessary to select, in order to select the peculiarities of their ecclesiastical discipline. But if what has been said does not appear to any one to belong to the discipline of the gospel, but that it also can be applied to others beside those mentioned, let him at least be convinced by subsequent declarations of the author, in which, if he is at all impartial, he adduces an irrefragable testimony on the same subject; for thus he writes: 'But, laying down temperance first as



a kind of foundation in their minds, upon this they build the other virtues ; for none of them bring food or drink before the setting of the sun, since they judge their philosophical exercise should be prosecuted in the light, but the necessities of the body in the dark. Whence they assign one to the day and the other to a small portion of the night. But some of them do not remember their food for three days when influenced by an uncommon desire for knowledge. And some are so delighted, and feast so luxuriously on the doctrines so richly and profusely furnished by wisdom, that they forbear even twice this time, and are scarcely induced to take necessary food for six days.' These declarations of Philo respecting those of our communion we deem obvious and indisputable ; but should any one be so hardy as to contradict, let him at least abandon his incredulity by yielding to the more powerful demonstrations which is to be found among none but in the religion of the Christians, according to the gospel. Our author also says that there were also females that meet with those of whom we speak, 'of whom the most are aged maidens, preserving their purity not by necessity, as some among the Greek priestesses, but rather by voluntary determination, in consequence of that zealous desire for wisdom, in the earnest prosecution of which they disregard the pleasures of the body, as they are desirous not of a mortal progeny but an immortal, which the heavenly mind is able to produce of itself.' After a little, he also adds the following with still greater stress : 'But they expound the sacred writings by obscure, allegorical, and figurative

expressions; for the whole law appears to these persons like an animal, of which the literal expressions are the body, but the invisible sense which lies enveloped in the expressions the soul. This sense was studied first pre-eminently by this sect, discerning, as through a mirror of names, the admirable beauties the thoughts reflected.' Why should we add to these their meetings and the separate abodes of the men and women in these meetings, and the exercises performed by them, which are still in vogue among us at the present day, and which, especially at the festival of our Saviour's passion, we are accustomed to pass in fasting and watching and in the study of the divine word? All these the above-mentioned author has accurately described and stated in his writings, and are the same customs that are observed by us alone at the present day, particularly the vigils of the great festival and the exercises in them, and the hymns that are commonly recited among us. He states that while one sings gracefully with a certain measure, the others, listening in silence, join in singing the final clauses of the hymns; also, on the above-mentioned days, they lie on straw spread on the ground, and, to use his own words, 'they abstain altogether from wine, and taste no flesh. Water is their only drink, and the relish of their bread salt and hyssop.' Beside this, he describes the grades of dignity among those who administer the ecclesiastical services committed to them, those of the deacons and the presidencies of the episcopate as the highest degree. But whosoever desires to have a more accurate knowledge of these things, may learn



them from the history already cited ; but that Philo, when he wrote these statements, had in view the first heralds of the Gospel, and the original practices handed down from the apostles, must be obvious to all.”\*

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\* The reader will bear in mind that all modern orthodox writers agree that Eusebius was not correct in his inference that the sects described by Philo were Christians. It must also be remembered that Philo does not refer in his many works to Jesus or to any of his apostles. The inference is plain that he had never met with them.

## CHAPTER X.

The Origin of the Therapeutæ—India—James—Jesus above all Sects—The Heathen Gods—Seneca—Cicero—Archbishop Tillotson—Ebionites—Bishop March—Beausobre—Eichhorn—The Wisdom of Jesus.

THE origin of this sect has attracted much attention, and has elicited the curiosity of the antiquarian. In a work entitled “The Celtic Druids,” published in 1827, the author says, “The Essenians, of whom Philo has written the history, were confessedly Pythagoreans. I think we may see some traces of these people among the Druids. They existed before Christianity, and lived in buildings called monasteria, or monasteries, and were called Koinobioi, or Cœnobites (living in common). There were three kinds: some never married, others of them did. They are most highly spoken of by all authors of antiquity who have named them.”

The learned Michaelis thought that their principles were derived from the Gnostic philosophy, of which they observed the moral part, while they rejected their absurd metaphysics. They abstained from blood, he says, and would not offer a sacrifice, and “all ornamental dress they detested.”

Speculation on this subject has been at fault till the recent publications of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, and the willingness evinced by the Hindoo priests to

allow the transcription of their Scriptures. All now is very plain ! This remarkable sect, that diffused itself over Europe before our era, dates its origin to Hindostan. It was but the resurrection of some Brahminical idea that Philo saw in Egypt exhibited in the Therapeutæ, and which he says "*is everywhere scattered over the world.*"

The following is a passage from Manou, the great lawgiver and legislator of India, who was unquestionably anterior to either Minos or Moses, as the Sanskrit was before either the Hebrew or the Greek language. He says, thousands of years before our era,—

"Let him (who has renounced the world) renounce the ordinary diet of the towns, renounce his wife, his sons, and all that he possesses.

"Let him take with him consecrated fire, and all the vessels necessary for sacrifice, and retire into the forest and subdue his appetites.

"Let him wear the skin of a gazelle, or a coat made of bark, and purify himself night and morning. Let him wear his hair long, and allow his beard, the hair of his body, and his nails to grow.

"Let him contrive, even from his scanty fare, still to give alms.

"Let him study the holy scriptures (the Vedas) unceasingly, enduring all with patience, be always resigned, show himself compassionate to all beings.

"Let him eat only fruits, herbs, and roots.

"Let him sleep upon the bare earth, on thorns and on flints.

"Let him preserve absolute silence, even when in

the villages begging nourishment for his perishable body.

“Let him not live by the practice of soothsaying or astrology.

“In governing his members, in renouncing every kind of affection, and all hatred, in flying from evil and practicing good, he prepares himself for immortality.

“Let him desire not death, let him desire not life, and as a laborer at evening waits peaceable for his hire at the door of his master, so let him wait till his hour is come.

“And when he shall hear the sound of the hour of death, let him request to be stretched upon a mat and covered with ashes ; and let his last word be a prayer for all humanity that must continue to suffer when he shall be reunited to the father of all things.”

It is not much wonder that the Jesuits attempted the destruction of the Hindoo sacred literature, which illustrated their plagiarisms with such irrefragable authority,—cœnobite life, baptism, confession, confirmation, ordination or consecration, tonsure, etc. etc.

They proclaim these absurdities in the name of Jesus ; but we will see that such things were not inculcated, and formed no part of his sublime *morale* !

“*Sterile indolence cannot be placed under the patronage of him who sanctified labor.*”

The Essenes or Therapeutæ, from the Aramaic word נָדַם, to cure, first appear in modern history in the second century B.C. John the Baptist was of this order, as were evidently the family of Jesus. His brother James was unquestionably, from the account

that Hegesippus\* gives of him, a member of this sect. In the fifth book of his commentaries he says, "But James, the brother of the Lord, who, as there were many of this name, was surnamed the Just by all, from the days of our Lord until now, received the government of the church from the apostles. This apostle was consecrated from his mother's† womb. He drank neither wine nor fermented liquors. A razor never came upon his head, he never anointed with oil, and never used a bath. He alone was allowed to enter the sanctuary. He never wore woollen, but linen garments. He was in the habit of entering the temple alone, and was often found upon bended knees, and interceding for the forgiveness of the people; so that his knees became as hard as a camel's, in consequence of his habitual supplication and kneeling before God. And indeed on account of his exceeding piety, he was called the Just, and Oblias (or Zaddick and Ozleam), which signifies justice and protection of the people; as the prophets declare concerning him. Some of the seven sects of the people, therefore, mentioned by me above in my commentaries, asked him what was the door to Jesus; and he answered that he was the Saviour. From which some believe that Jesus is the Christ."

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\* Eusebius, p. 76.

† Compare with Luke i. 15: *the similarity is most striking*. John the Baptist was also thus devoted as a *Nazir* from his birth! Some Buddhist monk had probably founded the Therapeutæ on the borders of Judea several generations previously: it is opposite to the spirit of ancient Judaism.

Hegesippus is frequently cited by Eusebius, "who flourished (he says) nearest the days of the apostles," but ecclesiastical writers generally place him some time in the second century. Eusebius, writing in the beginning of the fourth century, is careful not to approximate to a date in any of his authorities.

Some have thought that Jesus belonged to the Therapeutæ; but if we examine Matthew xiii, "And when he was come into his own country [he had evidently been, and probably a long time, from home], he taught them in their synagogue, inasmuch as they were astonished, and said, Whence has this man this wisdom, and these mighty words? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary, and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence, then, has this man all these things? And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country *and in his own house.*"

It is evident from many of his teachings that he was not of his own house and people in their thoughts and creed. He had been from his home, no doubt, as Justin says, "making plows and yokes, by which he taught the tokens of righteousness *and activity of life.*" And while thus engaged with his hands, he had not been idle with his mind, but had enlarged and enriched it by culture and study, and God had enlightened his understanding with the riches of his wisdom, and with his glorious light had poured in the effusions of his love, as he is always willing to do to all the sons of

men who are ready to receive him in the way of his coming !

Jesus thus grew out of the sect in which he was educated, though he yielded in some respects to its requirements, and even, *it is said*, submitting to the baptism of John, saying, "Suffer it to be so now." Yet, he has evidently been much misrepresented in this respect, as in many others, by his biographers, who held so much in common with the school of John. For he was accused of "eating and drinking," and was of cheerful and happy mood of thought ; loving the beautiful in nature, and was the especial friend of little children !

Yet in consequence of a sympathy with this sect in some of *its antagonisms*, and *an agreement with their mode of curing diseases*, but mainly, perhaps, in consequence of the alleged baptism by John,\* the Therapeutæ, by reason of their diffusion throughout the world, were prepared to give adhesion to, and in a very considerable degree to become the champions and propagators of, the doctrine and faith of Jesus. Hence we find monkery, asceticism, and the doctrine "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," prevailed. *And we first hear of this from John. Jesus endeavored to turn their attention inward*, but the outward view of John preponderated, the lesser outweighing the greater, as it has a thousand times since in the world. And the metaphorical language of Jesus in regard to the heavenly Jerusalem was perverted and construed to

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\* This baptism was denied by some ancient authorities.

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And the "Hebrews" were sick unto death with  
their legal forms and ceremonies, as their great minds  
were. Such enlightened men as Seneca and Cicero,  
though they might conform to the laws of the empire  
in regard to rituals, sacrifices, and the payment of  
tithes; though they might manifest outward respect  
to priests and priestesses at the shrines of Æsculapius  
and Prometheus, yet they lived in an atmosphere above  
such superstitions, and gave the obeisance of their  
hearts to the one true and living God. This their  
writings attest.

Having seen that the Synoptics, as the first three  
Gospels are called, were not written till after the fall  
of Jerusalem, and that they were entirely unknown to

\* Matt. xx. 20.

† Ibid., iii. 7.

Hegesippus (A.D. 125), who left *five books*, according to Eusebius,\* and which contained many details which he had received by tradition concerning the first era of the Church, but not one word concerning a written history by Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. He evidently knew of nothing but vague traditions, which he recorded in his five books for posterity, and which Eusebius had before him when he wrote his evangelical history (A.D. 316). And he doubtless had the best of reasons for suppressing the testimony of Hegesippus in regard to what he had received from those before him of the life and character of Jesus. For Eusebius could be very vague when it suited his purpose, and dealt much in such phrases as "about this time," "they also say," "and these things," "this appears also," etc. When it accords with his purpose, he is thus vague, and when it corresponds with his intent, no one can strain a point more than he, as it was his duty as Bishop of Cæsarea and President of the Nicene Council, just as it is the duty of the high as well as the lesser dignitaries of the Church in this day, to conceal the true and proclaim the mythological character of Jesus!

Eminent divines have, however, confessed, inadvertently perhaps, through an excess of faith, as one of the ancient Fathers said, in a rapture of ecstasy, "I believe it because it is impossible, I acknowledge it because it is absurd."

In a sermon by Archbishop Tillotson, as reported

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\* Eusebius, p. 76.

in the fourth volume of his sermons (Woodhouse's edition, p. 143), on the text (John i. 14) "*The Word made flesh.*" In this sermon this distinguished champion of the Church of England confesses its identity with the religion that was taught in the pagan temples of Greece and Rome. He says,—

"The third and last thing which I propose upon this argument of the incarnation of the Son of God was to give some account of this dispensation, and to show that the wisdom of God thought thus fit to order things, in great condescension, to the weakness and common prejudices of mankind.

"1st. The world was much given to admire mysteries, most of which were either very odd and fantastic, or very lewd and impure, or very inhuman or cruel. But the great mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God was such a mystery as did obscure and swallow up all other mysteries. That was a mystery indeed,—a mystery beyond all dispute and all comparison.

"2dly. There was likewise a great inclination in mankind to the worship of a visible deity, (so) God was pleased to appear in our nature, that they who were so fond of a visible deity might have one, even a true and natural image of God the Father, the express image of his person.

"3dly. Another notion which has generally obtained among mankind was concerning the expiation of the sins of men, and appeasing the offending deity by sacrifice; upon which they supposed the punishment due the sinner was transferred to exempt him from it, especially by the sacrifices of men," etc.

In determining the character thus assigned to Jesus as a god, let us inquire whether, in the early era of the Church, he was universally held as such. Eusebius tells us that the Ebionites "considered him as a plain man, and justified only by his advance in virtue, and that he was born of the Virgin Mary by natural gestation." This was a Hebrew sect,—the word *ebion*, in the Hebrew, signifying *poor*. Eusebius says that the name denotes "*the poverty of their intellect*,"—*i.e.* they had not the *imagination* of his Grace of Canterbury, as in the extract of sermon just given.

The Ebionites were believed to be identical with the Nazarenes, as they were both Hebrews. Origen says they derive their name from the word אֲבִיּוֹנִים. They rejected our New Testament, and had a gospel similar, in some respects, to Matthew. It was known as "The Gospel according to the Hebrews." Its antiquity was undoubted. Eusebius says the Hebrews "who received Christ were particularly delighted with it." The learned Dr. Beausobre (1736), in speaking of it, says,—

"At the head of the first class (of Scriptures) are to be placed two Gospels, that according to the *Hebrews*, and that according to the *Egyptians*. In my opinion, the Gospel according to the Hebrews is the most ancient of all. This, the Nazarenes pretended, was the original from which that of St. Matthew was taken. It began with these words, 'It happened in the days of Herod.'

"That which has been called *The Gospel according to the Egyptians*, is also of the same antiquity. Origen has mentioned it; Clemens Alexandrinus had previ-

ously quoted it in several places. There is also, in the *Library of the Fathers*, a commentary on St. Luke, attributed to Titus of Bostra, in which this bishop seems to place the Gospel according to the Egyptians in the rank of those which St. Luke had investigated, and consequently were anterior to his. Upon considering (the unquestionable fact) that it was received by the Christians of Egypt, I have not been able to hinder myself from thinking that it was written by the Essenes." It was full of mysteries (he says), allegories, and parables, and seemed to favor Encratism (monkery). Such, *in brief*, were the views of this learned French divine.

Bishop Marsh, of the Church of England, says, "St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, all three used different copies of *some common document*, which, before any of our canonical Greek gospels existed, was known as the Gospel according to the Hebrews, or the Gospel according to the Twelve Apostles; a gospel of which the ancients speak with great respect; or the Gospel according to the Nazarenes, or the Gospel according to Matthew, the materials of which our St. Matthew, who wrote in Hebrew, retained, in the language in which he found them, Hebrew, Chaldee, or Syriac; but St. Mark and St. Luke, besides their copies of that original Hebrew, Chaldee, or Syriac document, used a Greek translation of it, which had been made before any of the *additions* which our St. Matthew found in his Hebrew copy had been inserted. Lastly, the person who translated St. Matthew's Hebrew copy of that original document into the Greek frequently

derived assistance from the Greek translation of St. Mark, where St. Mark had matter in common with St. Matthew; that is, to save his own trouble he copied the Greek of St. Mark, instead of continuing his own translation *de novo* from Matthew's Hebrew transcript; and in those places, but in those places only, where St. Mark had no matter in common with St. Matthew, he frequently had recourse, with the same view, to the ready-made Greek of St. Luke's Gospel. But though the person who translated St. Matthew's particular Hebrew copy of the Hebrew document into Greek did compare and collate those two other Gospels with his own, yet Matthew, Mark, and Luke *had no knowledge of each other's Gospels.*"

Dr. Eichhorn, the great German divine, in his work on the "Origin of our Three First Gospels," 1794, held that the evangelists used one common document,— Luke having referred to an original document or documents as the basis of his Gospel. According to Eichhorn's theory, *the proprietors of the different copies of this document added on the margin those circumstances which had come to their knowledge, but which were unnoticed by the author or authors of the documents; and these marginal additions were taken by subsequent transcribers into the text.* This learned man, who was professor of Oriental languages in the University of Jena, also held that the original document used was *not* in the Greek, *but in the Hebrew or Chaldee language.*

We have thus, *in brief*, the opinions and hypotheses of three distinguished divines of the three great nations

of Europe two generations ago ; but before entering into a critical examination of these different views, and of the New Testament itself, let us take a *glance*, for the sake of the uninformed reader, of the Christian world in regard to these writings, from the fall of Jerusalem till the Council of Carthage, when the canon of Scriptures was finally established by a *vote* of the bishops present.

The Church seems to have been established in a greater or less degree in the principal towns on the Mediterranean *before* the year 70 of our era, with churches, schools, and bishoprics. For many years the church government was strictly congregational. The first general assembly, after that recorded in the Acts, at which James presided, was in the year 168, and was called the Quartodecimo Council. It was called in consequence of the attempt of Victor, Bishop of Rome, to cut off as heterodox the churches of Asia, because they would not conform to his view in regard to the Passover, they, or a majority of them, adhering to the institutions of their fathers, he insisting on the celebration of the Eleusinian Mysteries, or the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, *which was a pagan ceremony* in honor of Ceres, the goddess of corn, and Bacchus, the god of wine. Ceres gave her flesh to eat, and Bacchus his blood to drink.\* (John vi. 55.) Thus, in this particular, as in most others, paganism triumphed over the WISDOM OF JESUS.

War was substituted for peace, slavery for freedom,

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\* "All mysteries have ever been sublime."

falsehood for truth, darkness for light, sacred mysteries for a religion so plain "that the wayfaring man, though a fool, could not err therein," and priestcraft, with all its horrid and hideous deformities and machinations, for that perfect liberty which God gives! .

At an early age there were many traditions, and some of the recorded "logia," or sayings, of Jesus, in circulation. To these were added narrative and history to suit the palate of the people, and these accumulated to such an extent that in A.D. 368, the Council of Laodicea was called, and all the books that constitute the New Testament were adopted, except the Revelation, which had grown distasteful in consequence of the non-fulfillment of its prophecies. This book was not finally canonized till the Council of Carthage, A.D. 397, when it was decided that none but the present books should be read in the churches.

At the Council of Chalcedon, the New Testament was made the great appeal, but still Chrysostom, who died six years later, says that "the Acts of the Apostles were entirely unknown to many Christians."

And as late as A.D. 556, Dr. Lardner informs us, that the people considered themselves at liberty to judge for themselves in regard to the genuineness of what was in circulation as apostolic literature.

## CHAPTER XI.

Jesus taught in Chaldee—Myths—History—Similarity of the Synoptics—Augustine—Faustus.

THAT Jesus taught in the Hebrew, or, more properly speaking, the Chaldee or Aramaic tongue, is undoubted. It is not probable that he understood Greek, for it was a language that was regarded with great suspicion by the Jewish doctors, and not taught in their schools. Even Paul, when the chief captain asked him, "Canst thou speak Greek?" answered "in the Hebrew tongue." Josephus states that Hellenic culture was very rare in Judea. It was the language of mythology, and one of the Palestinian doctors manifested his hatred of it by saying, "He who breeds swine and teaches his son the wisdom of the Greeks," violates the laws of decency as well as of godliness.

That the gospel came to the Greeks in the Hebrew tongue is beyond all doubt, and I conceive this fact of *the greatest importance*. As we have seen, the Hebrew is a language so *metaphorical* in its idioms that its meaning could readily be transposed by translators into a *mythological intent*. Take, for instance, the title "Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." There is not a Hebrew word in it,—they are all Greek terms. Euse-

buis uses the word Auses for Jesus, the Greek form for the Hebrew\* Joshua. Zeus was the Greek, and Deus the Latin, for God. The title of the Greek divinity Adonis was "Our Lord," that of Hercules was "Our Saviour." And in the temple of Ptolemy Philadelphus was a statue of the Hindoo god Chrishna, placed there long before our era by this great *liberal*. From this word is the Greek Christos, from which the term Christ is derived!

We will see that what the Greeks and Latins effected in regard to the title which they conferred upon Jesus of Nazareth, giving to him *the names of their divinities*, they have also done to his whole history and character as far as they were able.

The theory of Bishop Marsh places the original "Logia" of Matthew, which term he uses in contradistinction to "*our St. Matthew*" before the time of Jesus. That is, *if the bishop was sincere in his view*, that the author of the first Gospel lived in apostolic times. This will not do, for it is just what scoffers would rejoice in, who argue that Jesus was a myth and not a real person. And one of them has quoted the bishop as having admitted "that Christianity was before Christ."

How much more rational is the hypothesis of Eichhorn, that the Gospels, as we have them, were of gradual formation! This view "infidels" most dread, because it wafts and scatters their delusions to the four winds. And the character of Jesus shines

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\* See note, page 22, Rev. Isaac Boyle's D. D. edition of Eusebius.

infinitely brighter when restored to its pristine splendor !

It must not be forgotten that *only* the *λόγια* (sayings) *are by Matthew*, according to Papias, and that the words "according to" were used in reference to the Gospels of the Hebrews, of the apostles, of the Egyptians, as well as the Gospel "according to" Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The history and miraculous events belong to a later era ; the sayings, "everybody translated as he was able."\* And *tradition furnished the history and narrative as it was necessary* for the purpose of disseminating doctrine and definition !

Not many years after the fall of Jerusalem *much of what we have in Matthew xxiv.* was written, depicting, as it does, in graphic and glowing colors, "the abomination of desolation. Nation against nation, kingdom against kingdom ; famine and pestilence ; false Christs and false prophets, who shall deceive many." "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations ; *and then the end shall come.*"

I do not believe that Jesus made this prediction, so foreign to the *wisdom* of his character, but that it is the language of some excited follower of the Baptist, who had just witnessed the "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world ;" who had lost all things but his faith in the events foreshadowed, no doubt by John, that "*this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled,*" and that "*for the*

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\* Eusebius, p. 127.

*elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*" As though God changed his economy even for the "elect."

We must remember that the public teaching of Jesus, according to the first three Gospels, only occupied about *one year*, and that John's preaching was contemporaneous with his. It is, therefore, not much to wonder at that the *views of the former were complicated with the latter*, especially as *tradition* was the vehicle by which they were conveyed to posterity.

We all know the uncertainty of this kind of evidence. In the neighborhood in which I live a circumstance occurred to corroborate it in a striking manner. During the Revolutionary war a battle took place, but no record was made of it, in consequence of its having partaken of the nature of a skirmish only, till on the breaking out of the recent rebellion, when funds were collected for the purpose of erecting a monument, and two quite able local historians attempted to procure the facts of the engagement. Now came the difficulty, for three generations had passed away, and the evidence was altogether hearsay. And an important detail of the battle will be transmitted to the future that a number of American prisoners were burned by the British in a stack of straw, of which there is the most contradictory stories, but no reliable data. And it has been determined that the monument is not on the ground on which the battle took place.

Now, in reference to miracles, and exact language, place the narrator at Greece or Rome, after the lapse of a century or a century and a half, and let him give details from a few disjointed "sayings," and many

miraculous accounts and occurrences, from tradition only,—remembering that his readers believe in miracles as the common occurrences of life as much as the “founders” believed in witchcraft,—and we can only wonder that truth is at all *legible*; and it proves to my mind the greatness of the character of Jesus, in that it still survives; that the limner can still catch a correct likeness amid the myths, the fables, and the false coloring with which superstition has enshrouded him.

In the first three Gospels a remarkable similarity exists in many parts. This is particularly so in the different chapters having reference to millenarian predictions. Sometimes the language is exactly the same, making allowance for different translations, as thus,—

## MATTHEW XXIV. 32.

Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

## MARK XIII. 28.

Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; when her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: so ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, That this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

## LUKE XXI. 31.

Behold a fig-tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of yourselves, that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

Upon this subject Dr. Niemeyer, professor of divinity at Halle (in 1790), said,—

“In the first place, the clear agreement of Matthew, Mark, and Luke in many parts of their Gospels, not only in the resemblance of the subjects of which they treat, but in the use of the same words, is understood. Make a hundred men to have been witnesses of the same fact; make the same hundred to have written accounts of what they saw; they will agree in matter, but they will differ in words. Who is ignorant that such an agreement is to be observed repeatedly in the commentaries of the evangelists? But this is not wonderful, since they drew from the same fountain. They translated the memorable *sayings* and actions of Christ, which were written in Hebrew, into Greek for the use of those who spoke the Greek language. But how came it that Luke *should follow a different arrangement from Matthew*? That many things should be wanting in Mark that are readily to be met with in Matthew, whose steps he seems to follow? That, in particular parts, one should be found more wordy than the other,—in observing minute circumstances more diligently? Why? Because, as we have said, there really was a wonderful diversity in the copies which contained those memoirs of the apostles; and, secondly, because it was optional for those *who composed their Gospels out of those commentaries* to add whatever they knew of the matter from other sources, and to *cut off* whatever they considered to be of equivocal credibility.”

No higher authority than Dr. Niemeyer can be quoted in the ranks of Protestantism. This divine had the honesty to say what he thought, and what *all*

*who critically examine the New Testament, and the history of the first three centuries, must think, that the Gospels are not original documents, but compiled after apostolic times.*

The writings in the New Testament clearly demonstrate this fact. The early Fathers of the Church, where they do not admit it, they clearly imply it. This is particularly the case with Augustine, and we have to rely on his own testimony as to the nature of his controversy with Bishop FAUSTUS. He tells us that the latter affirms,\* “The Gospels in some things are good authority, in others not. The Gospels,” he says, “were not written by Christ, nor his apostles, nor apostolic men: *but by some unknown persons a good while after their times. Nor were those who wrote them acquainted with the affairs of which they had written.*”

Augustine, although he was a pupil of Faustus, yet he afterwards denounced him as a heretic, and became himself one of the great lights of the then prevailing religion. Speaking of the people which Faustus presided over, he says,† “They had not the same notion that we have of the death of Christ. According to us, it is an offering to God for the expiation of the sins of men; according to them, it is only an act of sublime virtue.” In reference to the bishop’s faith we have his (Faustus’) own words. Speaking of the religion of the day, he says,‡ “They think that God is worshiped with altars, victims, chapels, images, and incense; I,

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\* Lardner’s Church Hist., iii. p. 417.

† Ibid., iii. 384.

‡ Ibid., iii. 385.

if I might be worthy, would esteem myself a reasonable temple of God. Christ, his Son, I receive as a living image of the living God. *His altar is my mind cultivated with care and endowed with knowledge and just sentiments.* The honors and sacrifices which I present to the Deity are prayers pure and simple."

This Christian sect, of which Augustiņe was nine years a member, and which afterwards he so zealously opposed and persecuted, held that Christ was a spiritual emanation rather than a personality, a form of light *as represented upon the mountain of transfiguration*, and that this light could not unite itself with matter, it was but a mere semblance, as represented in the man Jesus. They were terribly persecuted, and Justinian finally ordered them to be *all* put to death. Such was evangelical orthodoxy in that day. All Manichean literature was of course burnt, *and we can only judge of them by the writings of their opponents*, to whom they gave great offense by substituting *water* for *wine* in the ceremony of the Lord's Supper.\* Strong drink of all kinds was prohibited. They had no temples, neither did they baptize with water, and did not recognize a visible head to their church. Worship consisted, with them, in a dedication of the heart to God, and faith without works was dead. They continued till the eighth century.

The testimony of the intelligent and spiritually-minded Faustus I conceive of the greatest importance,

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\* Lardner's Church Hist., iii. 387. Though some authorities doubt their participating in this ceremony, at least as we understand it.

and do not believe that he can be connected with the absurdities *ascribed to Manes* by his enemies, and conclude this chapter by giving in full his bold challenge to Augustine. He affirms, "For many things have been inserted by your ancestors in the speeches of our Lord, which, though put forth in his name, agree not with his faith; especially since, as has already been often proven by us, that these things were not written by Christ or his apostles, but a long while after their assumption, by I know not what sort of **HALF-JEWS**, not even agreeing with themselves, who made up their tale out of reports and opinions merely; and yet, fathering the whole upon the names of the apostles of the Master, or on those who were supposed to have followed the apostles, they merely pretended they had written their notions and conceits according to them."\*

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\* "Multa enim a majoribus vestris eloquiis Domini nostri inserta verbas sunt; quæ nomine signata ipsius, cum ejus fide non congruant, præsertim, quia, ut jam sæpe probantur a nobis est, nec ab ipso hæc sunt, nec ab ejus apostolis scripta, sed multo post eorum assumptionem, a nescio quibus, et ipsis inter se non concordantibus **SEMI-JUDÆIS**, per famas opinionesque comperta sunt; qui tamen omnia eadem in apostolorum Domini conferentes nomina, vel eorum qui secuti apostolos viderentur, errores ac mendacia sua *secundum* eos se scripsisse mentiti sunt."

## CHAPTER XII.

Christianity in the First Century—Peter—Paul—Matthew—Luke—  
Jesus—The Church—East and West.

THAT the progress of Christianity was comparatively slow for the first century all ecclesiastical historians agree, and the writings of Paul clearly evince that he labored in an established church for its promotion, as the following quotations evince :

“Obey them that have rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief.” Heb. xiii. 17.

“Remember them that have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God.” Heb. xiii. 7.

“And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.” Acts xx. 17.

“I have been with you at all seasons. Ye all among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God.” Acts xx. 18–25.

“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.” 2 Cor. xi. 13.

When among the Jewish brethren, having Timothy with him, he went “privately to them which were of reputation, and because of the false brethren unawares

brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty." Gal. ii. 4.

In the Corinthians, Paul details circumstances of which we have no account in the Gospels: he speaks of "*that which I also received*," when *all* authorities place this epistle before the canonical Gospels. We have no account of "Christ having died for our sins," of any special appearance to James or to Cephas, nor were there twelve disciples after Judas. Nothing is said of the five hundred brethren in the Gospels; and it is evident that this account (1 Cor. xv. 1) was received from other Scriptures than ours.

In 1 Cor. xv. 29, Paul refers to usages in existence in the Church which he seeks to overthrow: "Why are they, then, baptized for the dead?" In all his epistolary correspondence this great man labored for the overthrow of existing superstitions, in the form of religious ceremonies, and that his writings have been *most wickedly corrupted and interpolated* is well known. He was also much deceived in relation to his millenarian ideas and other outward views, and which were in consequence of the common liability of the human mind to error and tradition. He constantly exhorted the Churches, which in *his time* were in existence at Corinth, Antioch, Rome, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, and Thessalonica, to come out of their outward observances, baptisms, ceremonies, and forms. But how could churches have been in existence at so many different points *with such deeply-rooted prejudices*, when Paul was the *first* of the apostles to go abroad? It is certainly contrary to all our experience to find in new organizations *such adherence to old observances*.

It was the opinion of some of the Fathers that Mark was the last writer of the Synoptic Gospels, and this view is evidently corroborated by internal evidence. With the exception of about twenty verses, this Gospel seems to have been compiled from Matthew and Luke, and was written some time after them.

If we examine, with care, Matthew and Luke, in connection with the Acts and the Epistles of Paul, we will see in the first-mentioned what is called a Peterian, and in Luke a Pauline, tendency. In the Galatians\* Paul alludes to the difficulties between himself and Peter, and the other Jews, who "dissembled likewise with him," finally "withdrew and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision."

This dissension is evidently alluded to in Matthew and Luke, the former having a Peterian, and the latter a Pauline, significance. Take, for instance, Matt. vii. 6, and compare with Luke vi. 38. The first is the language of the narrow and contracted school of Peter, and the latter the more enlarged view of Paul. In Matthew† the friends of Jesus *are expressly prohibited from preaching to the Gentiles, or even entering into any city of the Samaritans*, while in Luke‡ no mention is made of any such commandment, but it is the Samaritan,§ whom he addressed, when he said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." And Jesus is spoken of as traveling|| and healing in Samaria. In John it is a woman of this nation with whom he spoke concerning the spirituality of true worship!

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\* Gal. ii. 11, 12, 13.

† Matt. x. 5.

‡ Luke ix. 52.

‡ Luke xvii. 19.

|| Luke xvii. 11.

In Matthew much is said concerning certain events occurring that former predictions may be fulfilled, while in Luke but little is said in regard to the Old Testament and the prophets. The text in Matthew, in regard to the revelation to Peter as to the Messiahship, is rendered very differently in Luke. Nothing is said concerning the keys of the kingdom, *and the title that Peter proposes is looked upon with contempt, as "that thing," and they are commanded to say nothing about it!* Also it is well known that Luke has been willfully interpolated, and eminent divines have so viewed the following: the whole of the one hundred and twenty-six verses immediately following the preface; the whole of the story of the angel and the bloody sweat; all of the genealogy in this Gospel, as well as the transfiguration, the calming of the storm, the fable in regard to the swine, the story of the rich man in hell-fire. And Marcion quotes Luke xxiv. 39, "For a spirit hath not flesh and bones, which you see I have not." This quotation was made in the latter part of the second century.

Well might the learned and pious Dr. Evanson say, "Gracious God! have mercy upon the presumptuous folly and madness of thy erring creatures."

Mention is made in the Acts,\* that Paul and Barnabas "parted asunder, one from the other," Barnabas taking Mark, and Paul, Silas; but nothing is said in regard to Peter, and from this fact, and others also, it is evident that the Acts is an unreliable history.

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\* Acts xv. 39.

Antioch is the scene of the trouble in both the accounts. It is not far north of Jerusalem, and it was no doubt in a Therapeutic college that the separation took place, Peter insisting with his usual impetuosity upon the exclusion of the Gentiles and the rite of circumcision. Paul, it seems, was willing to concede the latter for Timothy,\* who, a Greek, was circumcised, "because of the Jews which were in those quarters, for they all knew that his father was a Greek." This *was after* the council at Jerusalem and the decision of James† in regard to circumcision. And we still find that Paul was an object of suspicion and of persecution "by false brethren" within the Church. Why was this? It was evidently because he was by education a Pharisee. This was in part the cause of the prejudice of the brotherhood; but it was mainly for the reason that he understood that the gospel was universal in its teaching and tendency.

The status of James has been given. Peter sympathized with him and John, in opposition to the views of Paul. This feeling was not a matter that a few years healed over, but it lasted for generations, and for very many years the term Pauline was applied to his writings. Eusebius informs us that he did not indorse his Epistle to the Hebrews because of the prejudice against him by the Jewish Christians.

If we ~~will~~ examine Acts xvii., it will be seen that the controversies there mentioned were in part at least in the Church, till "these strange things" awakened

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\* Acts xvi. 3.

† Acts xv. 24.

the attention of the Grecians. "For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent the time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing."

This dissension\* can be explained in no other way than the attempt of Paul to break through the prejudices of a long-established sect, confirmed by generations of fixed forms and ceremonies. They were not Pharisees or Sadducees, for Peter denounces *them* unsparingly. They were the Essenes or Therapeutæ. The testimony of Philo in the chapter given from Eusebius is, "This kind of men is everywhere scattered over the world, for both Greeks and barbarians should share in so permanent a benefit." This sect, in its different phases, attracted the attention of others than Philo. When the Emperor Hadrian visited Egypt, he found a church composed of Jews and Greeks, sufficiently important to attract the notice of that inquisitive prince.

The Therapeutæ in Greece and Rome were liberal, and much modified by dealing and mixing with the Gentiles, but in Judea the prejudice was strong against Grecian and Gentile usages, and when Paul concluded to go up to Jerusalem, and sailed for Asia, leaving behind him the Greeks that were with him at Ephesus, "he hasted, if it were possible for him to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost." When he came to Cæsarea he was "besought not to go up to that city." Paul

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\* St. Jerome, in the fourth century, says that this bickering was but a feint, but St. Hilary does not agree with him, and expresses his regret "that so great a man should patronize a falsity."

answered, "What mean ye to weep and break my heart?" Why was this, when James and the apostles were dwelling in peace among the Jews there? And when he arrived, he was *soon* brought to an account by the elders:\* "And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among them to forsake Moses, saying, that they ought not to circumcise the children, *neither to walk after their customs.*"

As we have said, the progress of Christianity was slow at first, for before the conversion of Constantine "in Rome, about the middle of the third century, and after a peace of thirty-eight years, the clergy consisted but of one bishop, forty-six presbyters, fourteen deacons, forty-two acolytes, and fifty readers, exorcists, and porters," and it was not till the seventh century that the gospel was preached in England.

In the Acts† we are told that "*Apollos, born in Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus,*" and that Aquila and Priscilla "*expounded to him the way of God more perfectly.*" Apollos, an Alexandrian, as the Acts state, "*was instructed in the way of the Lord*" and in the Scriptures. He, of course, had been instructed at the Essenian university at that place, *but not perfectly!*

The passage in 3 John iii. 10, which the Catholics read *monks* instead of brethren (and any Latin scholar will say that they are right), alludes to an established church, and that *Diotrephes refused to receive the apostle*. And in 1 John ii. 18, "the last time" is re-

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\* Acts xxi. 21.

† Acts xviii. 24.

ferred to, speaking of long-continued usages and many "anti-Christ's."

In Matthew "THE CHURCH" is spoken of as an established institution, and no doubt that Jesus said something like the language in chapter xviii. 15, for it is in accordance with the WISDOM OF HIS CHARACTER; but to make him say, "*Whatsoever ye shall bind in earth shall be bound in heaven,*" etc. etc., *is putting in his mouth the grossest absurdity.*

He did not belong to the Church, as we have seen, but probably gave some advice as to a rational and tender treatment of offenders; that we are to treat them as *the children of one common father*, and when all entreaty shall fail, that then "the word may be established;" but that we are to look upon erring humanity as "heathen men," is directly contrary to his teaching and to his wisdom!

In most of the different books of the New Testament we see evidences of Pauline and Peterine sentiment. This feeling was exhibited at the great Quartodecimo Council, A.D. 168, which was called on account of the attempt on the part of Victor of Rome to lord it over "the churches of all Asia," in respect to the paschal season. This difficulty was bridged over in a great degree, though it often manifested itself, and finally culminated in an open rupture between the churches of the East and the West, A.D. 482. It was the leaven in the first century that had leavened the whole lump. Though many attempts were made to heal the breach and unite the factions, yet all efforts were in vain, and have long since been abandoned.

And in the tenth century the Roman legate deposited upon the great altar of the church of St. Sophia, at Constantinople, the final sentence of excommunication. One of the principal complaints against the Roman Church by the patriarch, was the practice of *using unleavened bread at the Eucharist*, and this was about the only point of difference between them. Thus, the same question, though in a different form, that ten centuries before had separated Peter and Paul at Antioch, Judaism and anti-Judaism, now keeps asunder many millions of people who call upon the same God and profess the same faith.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Paul at Rome—Philippians—Was Peter at Rome?—The Second Epistle of Peter.

THE last account of Paul is in the Acts, where he is mentioned as dwelling "*two years in his own house, preaching the kingdom of God, and no man forbidding him.*"\* And it was from thence that he indited the most of his famous epistles which have exerted such a powerful influence upon the Christian world. And not only modern, but also ancient critics, have exercised their art and erudition in determining their genuineness and authenticity.

Paul arrived at Rome in the spring of the year 61. Before going to the Imperial City he had written to the brethren who were located there, and by this epistle it is clearly evident that the church there located was a long-established one, with all the prejudices that we would suppose the Essenes to have in religious matters against the "world's" people, or the Gentiles, but not, however, like that of their order in Judea. And the apostle is careful to tell them that the Gospel is to the "*Jew first, and then to the Gentile.*"† He also, while he urges a *circumcision of heart*, "*in the spirit and not the letter,*"‡ yet, in order that no offense may be

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\* Acts xxviii. 30.

† Romans ii. 10.

‡ Romans ii. 29.

given, in commenting upon his argument, he exclaims : *"What advantage, then, hath the Jew? or what profit is there in circumcision? Much in every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."*\*

This epistle, from *its whole tenor*, is addressed to the "brethren" who had settled at Rome, and who interpreted the Scriptures as Philo advises us in regard to the Therapeutæ: *"For they consider the verbal interpretation a sign indicative of a secret sense, communicated by obscure intimations."*† Paul, in this letter to the Romans, addresses them as the children of "Abraham,"‡ and allegorizes the ancient rite of circumcision, which the Jews borrowed from Egypt, and which Egypt got from India. He scruples not to symbolize the second chapter of Genesis, speaking of it as *"the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."*§

The whole of Chapter XXV. is addressed to a condition of things that denotes long-established forms, usages, and church government, with "ministers" and "exhorters."

In Chapter XIV., he displays that liberal tendency which called down upon him the condemnation of Peter, John, and the elders at Jerusalem: *"Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not. And let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth. For one that believeth may eat all things: another who is weak may eat herbs."*||

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\* Romans iii. 1. † Eusebius, p. 67 and Gal. iv. 24. ‡ Romans iv. 1.  
 § Romans v. 14. || Compare with Rev. ii. 14 and Rev. ii. 2.

We must remember that in the chapter given from Eusebius, in regard to the Essenes and their mode of diet, and also that of John the Baptist, in Matthew, which is similar, and that Jesus did not agree with them in this respect as in others, for he expressly said "*that it was not that which goeth in the mouth that defileth a man.*"\* And Paul, in Romans, chap. xiv., is urging this idea, and endeavoring to remove a prejudice on the part of some of the brethren, "*to the end that they might be established in spiritual gifts.*"† The church at Rome had been *instructed as Apollos the Alexandrian, but not perfectly.*

It was from this great city that Paul addressed his Epistle to the Philippians, in which he mentions that some of the brethren were members of "Cæsar's household." And in this letter he displays the tendency of his mind to adopt new things, for he no doubt found, on mixing with the "brethren", that they had become more liberal than he had supposed when he addressed them in his epistle from Corinth. We cannot determine the date of the Philippians,‡ but it was probably not long after his arrival at Rome. In it, however, he still evinces a belief in the outward coming of Jesus, and also (if the epistle is his production, for it has been disputed) a more materialistic view of him of Nazareth, and of the objects of his mission, and seems to have a faith similar to Justin in his "*name.*"§

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\* Compare with Rev. ii. 14.

† Romans i. 11.

‡ Phil. i. 1. Is addressed to "the saints with the bishops and deacons," showing a church of an established character.

§ Phil. ii. 10.

Cannot this be explained by the fact of the more than Essenian contempt which the "brethren" at Rome had for the rites and ceremonies of the law, as Paul speaks of their fame "*throughout the whole world*," and no doubt in this particular? This probably had carried them, *and Paul with them*, into more outward and even *polytheistic* views concerning the great man of Nazareth; for we have, as from the apostle, in this epistle sentiments that a son of Abraham, one should think, would have regarded with holy horror. In Philippians, chap. ii. 6, we find him, in speaking of Jesus, saying, "*Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.*"\* Jesus would no doubt have answered him, "*There is none good but one, that is God.*" And we may quote Paul against Paul, and say, "*God forbid: yea, let God be true and every man a liar.*"† If Paul had thus fallen from his high state, it was no more than the wise King Solomon did in his old age in placing "the abomination of Moab before Jerusalem."‡

The sentiment in Philippians iv. 8 is decidedly Eclectic, and belongs, by right, to that school: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Paul was the only one of the apostles (he was classed with the twelve) who left Asia for the pur-

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\* Phil. ii. 16.

† Rom. iii. 4.

‡ 1 Kings xi. 7.

pose of disseminating the gospel in Europe among the brethren located there, for it was the fashion then as now for the Jews to circulate among the Gentiles in the pursuit of fortune, and they were to be found in all quarters of the globe.

The Catholic Church claim that Peter was at Rome, and there suffered death; but this rests upon the most uncertain tradition. Eusebius relates it as *such*; but Protestant writers have generally believed that he never left Asia. There is certainly nothing in the Acts or in his writings that would lead to a contrary supposition. In them he displays the most *decided*\* millenarian tendency and that narrowed Hebrew sentiment that the generous-hearted Paul so detested. The Gospel according to Peter is to "*a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.*"†

Towards Paul he manifests much feeling, and this was no doubt from the sincerity of his heart. He speaks of him as one who uses "*great swelling words of vanity,*" who brought in "*damnable heresies,*‡ *and who, while they promise liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption.*"§ The last four verses in 2 Peter have unquestionably been added at a subsequent period. This may have been the reason why some of the Fathers looked on this epistle with such suspicion. Origen says, "Peter has left one epistle undisputed. Suppose also the second was left by him, for on this there is some doubt."||

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\* 2 Peter iii.

† 1 Peter ii. 9, 18.

‡ 2 Peter ii. 1.

§ 2 Peter ii. 18, 19.

|| Eusebius, 246.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Galatians—Acts—Stephen—The Apostles—Conversion of Paul—  
The early Church did not reflect the thought of Jesus.

IN determining the status of the four Gospels, their relation to each other and the date of their compilation,—for we have seen that their accumulation was the result of *growth*,—a critical examination of the Acts and of the fourteen epistles of Paul, and their connection with each other, will be necessary. This is the more important inasmuch as it is claimed that the *compiler* of the Gospel according to Luke and of the Acts of the Apostles was one and the same person. In the introduction to the third Gospel the compiler speaks of "*many*" who had undertaken this before him. He therefore attempts to "*set these things forth in order*," and expressly declares that he was not an eye-witness; that his testimony is only hearsay, and dedicates his book to Theophilus, who was a Greek of some position in the world. The book of Acts is also dedicated to the same person, and all writers, I believe, are of the opinion that the compiler of the one was the compiler of the other.

In the Galatians, Paul gives a condensed statement of his conversion and labors in the Church, and says, "*Before God I lie not*,"\* as though his word had been

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\* Gal. i. 20.

called in question by some one. It seems that he was regarded with suspicion from the first, for when he "*assayed to join himself to the disciples*"\* he was rejected by them. He narrates that he then "*went into Arabia;*"† from thence to Damascus. And "*after three years he went up to Jerusalem;*"‡ then to the "*churches of Judea*" and to the "*regions of Syria and Cilicia.*" "Then, fourteen years after,"§ he went again to Jerusalem. In this account he tells naught of his sudden conversion and of his having been led stone-blind into Damascus, but expressly says that he "*went into Arabia.*" Now, this account and the account in the Acts are not *both true, and no criticism can reconcile them.* In the Acts xxii. 10 and 11, he is not only told by the apparition "*to go into Damascus,*" but the text states that he was led there "*by the hand of them that were with me.*" And Damascus and Arabia, as all know, are at directly opposite points of the compass, particularly as the three accounts in the Acts all state that he was journeying *from Jerusalem to Damascus.*

Again, in the Acts ix. 7, xxii. 9, and xxvi. 14, we have *three different versions* of Paul's supernatural conversion. The first text states that the witnesses of this event "*stood speechless, hearing a voice* but seeing no man;" the second, that they "*saw indeed the light and were afraid, but they heard not the voice.*" In the last, no account is given of this remarkable blindness that required assistance, in order that Paul might reach the city of Damascus in safety.

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\* Acts ix. 26.

† Gal. i. 17.

‡ Gal. i. 18.

§ Gal. ii. 1.

The Acts were therefore compiled from divers sources, many of them fabulous and mythical; but some of them are doubtless reliable, and are corroborated by other testimony. The myths and fables I leave to those whose *business it is* to preach the Bible as the word of God, for I do not believe in any such unreliable word; but, on the contrary, my belief is as firm as the everlasting hills in His Internal Word, that is nigh in the heart and in the mouth of all His intelligent creatures, and which is, as that great man, Elias Hicks, said, "*far above all that can be written or spoken.*"\*

My business, then, is to endeavor to reconcile the truths of this book; to winnow the chaff and treasure up the golden grains of true wisdom which it contains.

If the account in the Acts ix. 26,† was Paul's first visit to Jerusalem after his conversion, three years must have elapsed between the fact narrated in the preceding verse. This shows how faulty has been its compilation, for we have it as a continuous history in regard to Paul, and in both texts he still retains his original name of Saul.

Stephen was more obnoxious to Paul before his confirmation than the other disciples, for, after he had been put to death, James and they were unmolested in Jerusalem. And we read that Paul was, after his conversion, placed between two fires, that the Jews sought "to kill"‡ and the Grecians "to slay him;"§ the former

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\* Sermons, p. 222. † Compare with Gal. i. 18. ‡ Acts ix. 23.

§ Acts ix. 29.

because he had left his old friends the Pharisees, and the latter because they were the friends of the murdered Stephen. His great sorrow for his participation in this tragedy he has most feelingly detailed in his epistles.

We find the twelve complaining of these that they were not "reasonable"\* in their demands, and the charge against Stephen was that he desired "to change the customs which Moses delivered us." This it was that led to the bloodshed and so aroused the wrath of Paul, for he had been kindly in his relations with the "twelve;" and his preceptor, Gamaliel,† had just espoused their cause in an argument delivered before the council.

The conversion of Paul was therefore sudden; his conscience had been awakened, his heart touched, and his mind prepared by the teaching of liberal-minded Gamaliel, and the universality of God's love had been revealed to him, as it has been so many million times since to the children of men. The light that he saw was *inward and spiritual*, not outward and visible; and it was so originally related by Paul. The *different versions* of the story will explain how the mythical and fabulous came in. To this we must add the different translations: First, from the *metaphorical Hebrew* into the Greek, probably; and finally into that barbarous, monkish Latin that the Fathers, particularly Jerome, complained of, and which he says "is cor-

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\* Acts vi. 2.

† Acts v. 34.

rupted everywhere to meet the views of the time and place, or the caprice of transcribers.”\*

Stephen was murdered for the same cause for which Jesus had been put to death : because he opposed the traditions of the Jews. Each of them denied the fundamental doctrine of the Jewish system, and this led to furious hate and persecution, and finally to death !

It is evident that Stephen was a true follower of Jesus, and appreciated him most certainly in one respect, and that a most important one in the estimation of the latter, as he utterly denied that darling idea of the Jews that the sacrifice in the temple in the great city was particularly acceptable and pleasing to God. Stephen also rejected this. “Howbeit,” he said, “the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands.”†

It was no doubt the presence of these brethren from Greece, who were on a visit to Jerusalem, that occasioned the trouble between them and the “twelve.” They were not Grecians in the strict acceptation of the term. The names given are no proof of this, as Philo the Jew might be claimed as a Greek for the same reason. These were of the Therapeutic faith *from abroad, of the Eclectic school*, and the law of Moses sat loosely upon them, and the *mooted question was, as in the time of Jesus*, whether the day had not come for the *abrogation of that law*.

For espousing this cause Stephen lost his life, and a great persecution was instituted “against the Church which was at Jerusalem ; and they were all

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\* John Jackson's Dissertation, p. 85.

† Acts vii. 48.

scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, EXCEPT THE APOSTLES.”\* And those who held with them were likewise unmolested, for we learn in the next chapter that, having heard of the proceedings in Samaria, the apostles “*sent unto them Peter and John.*” It is therefore very clear that they were, at least, indifferent to the fate of Stephen, and that they were not implicated in the charge against him “*of changing the customs which Moses delivered to us.*”†

The status of James, the brother of Jesus, we have seen in the extract from Hegesippus, page 109 of this volume; and we need but turn to the account which Josephus has given us of the Essenes to see that he (James) was one of this order, occupying a high position in the Church: “What they most of all honor,” Josephus says, “after God himself, is the name of their legislator (Moses), whom if any one blaspheme he is punished capitally.”‡ They clothe themselves with “white garments” and think oil a defilement; and if any of them be anointed without his own approbation, it is “wiped off his body.” They are extremely abstemious, and partake of but “a single plate of one sort of food,” and had a “*a certain holy temple,*” with high dignitaries or bishops in the Church, and “think it a good thing to obey their elders or major part.” “The judgments they pass are most accurate and just,” and they have great respect for courts composed of “*hundreds.*”§ The most extreme penance is enjoined on account of conscious offenses. This

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\* Acts viii. 1.

† Acts vi. 14.

‡ Jos. pp. 249, 250.

§ Compare with Acts i. 15.

may explain the self-inflicted punishments of James in that he once sympathized with those who sought his brother's life. See John vii. 10.

Josephus has cited the Essenes, or Therapeutæ (who were one and the same, the latter name being only a Greek translation of the former, *Ἐσσηῖται*, *asaya*, "physicians"), much more than the sect to which he belonged,—the Pharisees, the Sadducees, or the other different people of Judea, who, in his time, were distinct. And I will give a few *more* quotations from him to show the identity between the faith, discipline, and usages of the first-mentioned sect and the apostles.

"There are also those among them who undertake to foretell things to come by reading the holy books, and using several sorts of purifications, and being perpetually conversant in the discourses of the prophets; and it is but seldom that they miss in their predictions. . . . They say that all souls are incorruptible, but that the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment. . . . Ascribe all to providence and to God, and yet allow, that to act what is right, or the contrary, is principally in the power of men. . . . Their doctrine is that bodies are corruptible; but the souls are immortal and continue forever. . . . They dispense their anger after a just manner, and restrain their passion; and are eminent for fidelity, and are the ministers of peace: whatever they say is firmer than an oath; but swearing is avoided by them, and they esteem it worse than perjury. They also take great pains in studying the writings of the ancients, and choose out of them what is most advantageous to soul and body. . . . They have

no one certain city, *but many of them dwell in every city.*"\*

Josephus also says that they are great physicians, and believe much in "bathing their bodies. . . . They carry nothing with them when they travel into remote parts, for in their own sect whatever they have lies open to them. Accordingly there is in every city where they live one appointed particularly to care for strangers, and to provide garments and other necessities for them. . . . They reject pleasure as an evil, and esteem continence and the conquest over our passions as a virtue." They have a somewhat low view of woman, and "do not esteem wedlock, but do not absolutely deny the fitness of marriage."

"These men are despisers of riches, and are so very communicative that it raises our admiration. Nor is there any one to be found among them who possesses more than another, for it is a law among them that those who come to them must let what they have be common to the whole order, insomuch that among them all there is no appearance of poverty or excess of riches; but every one's possessions are intermingled with every other's possessions. . . . They condemn the miseries of life, and are above pain by the generousities of their minds. And as for death, it will be for their glory, they esteem it better than living always. . . . They do not offer sacrifices, because they have more pure lustrations of their own; on which account they are excluded from the common court of the temple, but offer their sacrifices themselves."†

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\* Josephus, cviii. p. 247.

† Ibid., p. 41.

That James, Peter, John, and Jude held to the faith of their fathers their writings abundantly testify, for we search in vain for a sentiment condemnatory of the law and the prophets. They all agreed in their denunciations of Paul, "as casting a stumbling-block before the children of Israel,"\* and "as having went out of us, . . . becoming a deceiver and an antichrist."† And Jude using almost the same terms as Peter in regard to those "whose mouth speaketh great swelling words."‡ They held with Essenian pertinacity to Moses as they understood him.

The Acts§ describe Peter as having held Pauline sentiments that do not correspond with his writings, or with the account given by Paul "that the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter." And that "when Peter was come to Antioch I withstood him to the face. . . . For before *that certain* came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision, inasmuch as Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulations."||

Now, this took place from seventeen to twenty-five¶ years after the time of Stephen's death. It would seem that Peter had an Essenian respect for "the directions" which came from James, who was the head\*\* of the Church in council assembled. And it is clear from the statement of Paul, in the Galatians, that the Acts have not given a correct statement of the views

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\* Rev. ii. 9-14.

† 1 John ii. 19.

‡ Jude i. 16.

§ Acts xv.

\*\* Acts xv. 19.

|| Gal. ii. 13.

¶ Gal. i. 17; ii. 1.

of James at the gathering at Jerusalem, because the separation at Antioch was subsequent to that.

Having thus seen that the book of Acts is not a correct and consistent history, either with itself or with coteremporaneous narratives. That it is a compilation of circumstances, given by tradition, which took place in Asia and at different points in Europe many hundreds of miles distant from each other. Who the writer was we do not know, but it is believed that the same pen that wrote the Acts also indited the Gospel according to Luke. And they profess to have been written by the same person in their different preambles.

The Acts was evidently written very soon after the latter, as other sayings\* of Jesus are rendered in the former that belonged by right in the Gospel, and would have been put into that compilation had their author known of them before its publication. Dr. Lardner is of the opinion that the Gospel was published in Greece, and I see no reason to doubt it. This book, we have seen, has a strong Pauline tendency in its renderings of the thought of Jesus. Its author, however, belonged to the Eclectic school of the Essenian faith, as we will see when we analyze and examine it.

The Acts, however, plainly evinces a Peterian leaning, and places Peter in a prominent light and in an untruthful position, *as Paul has clearly shown*. And the question is, How can this inconsistency be explained? We have seen that the contest in the Church (A.D. 168) was in consequence of the bishop at Rome

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\* Acts xx. 35.

attempting to assume that prerogative which the churches in Asia resisted. It was very natural for him to claim this as the resident bishop of a city that asserted and exercised dominion over the most of Europe and Asia as a temporal power.

After having published his Gospel, and having another compilation in prospect,—being in search of evidence for his history,—it was but natural for the author to go to the city of Rome in pursuit of it; taking with him his book which he had before published in Greece.

While at Rome he wrote the Acts, compiling it out of the material that he had in hand, blending them together with considerable skill; and placing Peter on the foreground, endowing him with miraculous power, and striking with the terrors of death itself those who refused to render to the Church her due.\* An additional evidence as to the place indicated of the publication of this book is to be found in the naturalness of the last two verses in regard to Paul. The reason for this “robbing Paul to pay Peter” can be found in the saying of Matthew, on which the Roman Church founds her prerogative and power.

That the author of the book of Acts was capable of thus *harmonizing* history to accord with circumstances the third Gospel plainly evidences. In compiling it, he was no doubt embarrassed with material both written and traditionary, most probably the same that Justin quotes from A.D. 168. And we must remember

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\* Acts v.

that this most wonderfully *knowing* personage had not the least knowledge of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, or of any Gospel "according to" them. He cites well-known passages in the three first, but not one word from the last. We have also much from him that is not rendered in the canonical Gospels.

## CHAPTER XV.

The Third Gospel compared with the First—Josephus—Essenes—  
The Temple.

THE compiler of the Gospel according to Luke had, no doubt, all that was in the hands of Justin. He certainly had the Gospel of the Ebionites, for the fragment that Epiphanius has transmitted to us corresponds with Luke i. 5. And this Gospel he has largely illustrated in regard to some of its tendencies and teachings. The view in Matthew, which would seem to commend a lack of forethought, is carried to excess in the commendation of Mary, and in the implied rebuke of Martha's providence and care. And hence the accumulation of property is regarded as a great evil. The simile of the camel and the needle's eye is given that has perplexed so many! When Matthew has it, "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness," Luke says, "Blessed are ye poor." "It is to the poor that the gospel is preached." "The lame, the poor, and the blind are to be called," and woe and condemnation are for "the rich and full."

We have much that is different from Matthew. The beautiful parable of the prodigal son is given, which has on it the impress of truth, beauty, and tenderness, teaching naught in regard to the atoning blood of in-

nocency. That objectionable parable\* in respect to miracles is also rendered that would imply deception and mystery, so contrary to the wisdom of Jesus. The case of the woman having an issue of blood is different from Matthew as against the prevailing mode of physics. The Essenian mode† of anointing is approved, and carried to absurdities, as also are other teachings.‡ He having stated in the Acts§ that Judas had met his end differently from Matthew,|| he but alludes to the fact of his intended purpose, and of his consequent fate.

The text in reference to Jesus having been born at Bethlehem, is explained "that he was brought up at Nazareth." He tones down absurdities by rational renderings: that he was "Joseph's son as it was supposed." And has his mother to own him as such: "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." As in the other Gospels, so in this, errors are made in chronology,¶ though much knowledge is displayed as to the mode of worship by the Essenes. The temple from which Anna, the prophetess, "departed not," could not have been the temple at Jerusalem, as women were not allowed to enter there; but must have been such as is described by Josephus in the extract given from him. This is further exemplified in the last verse of this gospel, *and is proof that disciples were not ortho-*

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\* Luke viii. 10.

† Luke xiv. 26.

‡ Matt. xxvii. 5.

§ Luke vii. 46.

¶ Acts i. 18, 19.

¶ For example, what he says concerning Quirinius, Lysanias, and Theuda. Josephus, i. 548.

*dox Jews*,—as in fact the temple was not a place in which devotions were performed. We read that James entered the temple alone, in the extract from Hege-sippus. This was of course not the temple in the holy city, for it would not have been allowed, the temple there being a place of sacrifice, and not of devotion.

Foreigners were prohibited, under penalty of death, from entering it, and this was announced by posters on the walls of the second inclosure. Into this only "such as were pure came in." Still more inward was "the temple itself, whereinto it was not lawful for any but the priests to enter alone." King Herod did not attempt it: he had inclosures adjoining. And when Titus went into the holy of holies, it was only to save it from the flames of destruction and the fury of his soldiers.\*

The compiler of the third Gospel, if he gave the royal ancestral tree to which King Herod even made no claim, alleging that the race of David had become extinct, yet is careful to place the Essenian view in regard to the exaltation of the humble and lowly in a strong light. He most probably sympathized with this view, and was a Therapeutic preacher and healer of the itinerant order in the second century, and thus became so conversant with the different phases of opinion. Of the Baptist he has an exalted idea, and says, "The law and the prophets *were until John*: since that time the kingdom of God is preached."†

Some writers are of the opinion that the compiler of

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\* Josephus.

† Luke xvi. 16.

the third Gospel had the first before him when at his work; but there is no evidence of this; on the contrary, as all agree that the Acts were compiled by the same author, and after Luke, he certainly, as he was eminently a harmonizer, would not have stated so important a fact, that Judas lost his life by an accident in his own field,\* when Matthew expressly states that he “went† and hanged himself.” Neither would he have rendered parables, incidents, and discourses so differently, if the Gospel of Matthew was before him. This theory can be explained on no other ground than that of sheer antagonism, of which there is no proof; but we have seen the contrary, that he was willing to make incongruities concordant to please the Church at Rome, and to conciliate the different elements then existing among the brethren!

Matthew was compiled in Asia in the same way as Luke at Rome, by some unknown person, most probably at Antioch, he having most of the materials of Luke, and some of them identical, word for word. And, although living in Asia, he was not so much of a geographer as the compiler of Luke. He was no traveler, but was probably a monk, holding the views of Origen:‡ “*And there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.*”

The religious devotee and ascetic is exhibited in this

\* Acts i. 18.

† Matt. xvii. 5.

‡ Matt. xix. 12. The author of this was not a Jew, see Deut. xxiii. 1, but a monk from Egypt, who had probably settled in Antioch, at the monastery there.

Gospel, and in Luke the contrary—in the *slight touchings* which as artists they have given to the same portrait, for it has been shown that they drew from the same fountain, and had very much the same materials before them. Take, for instance, the different pictures that they have drawn of John the Baptist. Matthew makes him a father confessor: "*And they were baptized of him, confessing their sins.*" "*And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair,*" etc., etc. In Luke we have nothing concerning his monkish attire, or of the people confessing their sins; but what is omitted in Matthew is inserted in Luke, concerning "*him that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none.*"

Their respective positions are explained,—the compiler of Luke is a poor and an itinerant Therapeutic, while he of Matthew is probably a high dignitary in some well-endowed monastery, therefore he renders the "sayings," "*to the poor in spirit,*" and Luke to the poor in a *literal sense*: "*Wo unto you that are rich, for you have received your consolation.*"

A slight variation exists in reference to the baptism of Jesus, and in the fourth Gospel no mention is made of such ceremony being performed by John, and judging from the fragments which have been preserved by the Fathers, the sinless Jesus was not baptized, but refused to submit to this rite, which had its origin in Egyptian asceticism.

We have the testimony of Clement\* of Alexandria

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\* Eusebius, 234.

that the Gospel according to Mark was written after Matthew and Luke: this information he says that he obtained from tradition, and his testimony would seem to be sustained by internal evidence. It has only about twenty verses of original matter, and has been evidently compiled out of Matthew and Luke. If it was a compilation from the commentaries, or memoirs, as Justin calls the writings that he has cited, it does not seem credible, that the author, with that love of the marvelous which he so exhibits, should have failed to draw *more plentifully* from the overflowing fountains of myths and fables with which the age was so overcharged; the writer of the fourth Gospel, written some years later, confesses this with much ingenuousness, and "supposes that even the world itself could not contain the books that *should be written*."\*

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\* Compare Matt. xxi. 12, 13 with Luke xix. 45, 46, and John ii. 14-21. And Matt. xxvi. 6-13 with Luke vii. 37-46, and John xii. 1-8. And Matt. xiv. 28 with John vi. 17-21. And Matt. xvi. 5-7 with Luke ix. 10-17, and John vi. 17-21.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Melito, Bishop of Sardis—The Truth—Apollinaris—Dionysius—  
Theophilus—Irenæus—Clemens Alexandrinus and the Alexandrian  
School—Greek Thought.

BEFORE we dogmatically fix a date either to the Acts or the four Gospels, let us take a glance at the condition of the Church as it is reflected by the writings of the Fathers in the latter half of the second and the beginning of the third centuries, when the Gospels "according to" Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John emerged from the obscurity which in a historical point of view had before enveloped them. *All modern writers without exception admit this to have been the case.* Before Justin's time great uncertainty existed in a chronological sense. When Eusebius wrote his history he knew almost nothing with any sort of exactitude previous to about that time, and we have little cotemporary history to direct our steps. For Christianity was so small in its beginnings that the great writers of the time did not notice it.

And this is additional testimony that its conflicts and triumphs for the first century and a half were very much confined to existing and regular organizations, which were scattered in all the cities bordering upon the Mediterranean. These organizations, though not altogether secret, yet were of a *homogeneous char-*

*acter.* Josephus\* informs us that the Essenes were very careful in the initiation of new members into their community, and that they had much of that Judaical exclusiveness so characteristic of the *whole race*.

We can scarcely turn to any of Paul's epistles and fail to see that he was addressing this state of things. Mere names denote nothing; for the Therapeutæ date centuries back of our era, and the Jews from home had Greek and Latin names. To induce the "brethren" to receive Jesus, Paul was "willing to please all men in all things. Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are *under the law, as under the law.*" Again, "Whatsoever† is sold at the shambles, that eat, asking no questions for conscience' sake." This it was that called forth the reprobation of John in the Revelation in regard to "those‡ who eat things sacrificed unto idols," and consort with the "Nicolaitanes."§

Melito, Bishop of Sardis, is next in order to Justin, and Eusebius has preserved some quotations from his writings; but no citation or reference to the books of the New Testament, except the "Revelation of John."|| An extract from his address to the Emperor Antoninus is also preserved, in which he speaks of the great antiquity of the Church, and says, "The philosophy that we profess, first, indeed, flourished among the barbarians, but afterwards, when it grew up also among the nations under your government, *under the glorious*

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\* Josephus, ii. 248.

† 1 Cor. x. 25.

‡ Rev. ii. 14.

§ Rev. ii. 6.

|| Eusebius, p. 163.

*reign of Augustus, your ancestor, it became, especially in your reign, an auspicious blessing.*" "Nero and Domitian alone, stimulated by certain malicious persons, showed a disposition to slander our faith." Now, as Marcus Antoninus began his reign A.D. 161, we cannot date this apology before that time. Here is a bishop of the Church, who says, in a perfectly authentic document, that "the profession" was before the reign of Augustus, which ended A.D. 14, *or sixteen years before the public ministry of Jesus.*

It is, therefore, unnecessary to occupy more space or time in attempting to demonstrate that the church organization in which James, Peter, John, and Paul contended for the advancement of *their faith* was in existence, and had been established long before the birth of Jesus or any of his cotemporaries.

Some may think that such a view is antagonistic to, and is questioning the authenticity of the religion of Jesus. But does it not rather brighten with the luster of truth *the faith he really taught*, wafting away the clouds that rest upon his name, and which partially, at least, obscure the full effulgence of the wisdom of his character, enabling us clearly to perceive the divine and holy truths which he inculcated in the name of his Father and his God? It exhibits to us, in a clear manner, how monkery, penance, and priestcraft came to be substituted for true religion and associated with his name from the monasteries of the Therapeutæ; how pagan rites and ceremonies came to be combined with the polytheism of Rome and the vagaries of Plato; and, finally, how the false reasoning

of the Eclectic school of Alexandria threw a deceptive gloss of a false philosophy over precepts as pure as ever fell from the lips of mortal!

After Melito we have Apollinaris, Dionysius, and Theophilus. They were evidently not the brightest luminaries of the Church, and from them we learn but little of the New Testament, except the Revelation, which seems to have been in the hands of all of them. The first mentioned states that he received from tradition that Jesus commanded his apostles not to leave Jerusalem for twelve years, and that John had raised a dead man at Ephesus. It was in the time of Dionysius that a census of the Church at Rome was taken with the result which we have given, showing that their numbers in all amounted to about fifteen hundred persons.\*

Irenæus, A.D. 190, is the first of the Fathers to speak of the fourth Gospel, and makes mention of the Synoptics. He has much respect for the Revelation, also for the Pastor of Hermes, and testifies that the Ebionites "assert that Jesus was begotten of Joseph." He hands down a number of interesting traditions concerning the Apostle John, who he says† "*was also a priest, and bore the sacerdotal plate* (*πεταλον*)". He is fond of citing Polycarp, who was a disciple of John, of whom there was a tradition that for a long time after he had been buried that he was not dead, but "only slumbereth there;" and Augustine says that those who knew the place "must have seen the earth thus heave

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\* Eusebius, p. 265.

† Ibid., p. 208.

up and down; and it is certainly truth, we are assured as having heard it from no light-minded witnesses." This was in accordance with the promise in Luke ix. 27, which compare with John xxi. 23.

Clemens Alexandrinus, who was a cotemporary of Irenæus, is a very important personage, and he, in the latter part of the second and in the beginning of the third century, with his pupil Origen, exercised a widespread and lasting influence upon the faith taught in the name of Jesus. He was at first a Stoic, then a Platonic philosopher, and finally, through the influence of Pantæus, the president of the monkish university at Alexandria, became connected with it, and succeeded him as principal. At Alexandria was the first and greatest library in the world; here was also the first bishopric of the Church. Eusebius says that Anianus, in that capacity, succeeded Mark. One of the original Gospels was "according" to the Egyptians. In those days the studies of divinity and medicine were identical. The Therapeutæ, as their name denotes, were of this order, and of course were ready to unite and blend their art to a mysterious sanctity for the purpose of imposture, for the age was easily imposed on, and without some special and supernatural agency, diseases—or devils, for they were considered synonymous—could not be expelled from the body or mind. The Emperor Adrian, A.D. 134, in a letter to his brother-in-law, noted this state of things: "Egypt, which you commended to me, my dearest Servianus, I have found to be wholly fickle and inconstant, and continually wafted about by every breath of fame. There is here

no ruler of a Jewish synagogue, no Samaritan, no presbyter of the Christians, who is not either an astrologer or a soothsayer. The very patriarch himself, should he come to Egypt, would be required by some to worship Serapis, and by others to worship Christ. They have, however, but one God, and it is one and the selfsame whom Jews, Gentiles, and Christians alike adore,—*i.e.* money.”

It was this fickle, inconstant, or liberal tendency which was the distinguishing feature of the Alexandrian school. Judaism mingled with Platonism, and Oriental mystery with Greek thought, in a sort of religio-philosophical system, which sought to *incorporate or elect truth from every source and clime*, but of which the philosophy of Plato was the substratum, and in the formation of which—for the growth was gradual—Judaism, mysticism, Orientalism,\* fanaticism, and asceticism were intermingled and mixed, stratum by stratum.

The population of Alexandria had been largely composed of both Greeks and Jews for many hundreds of years before our era. It was here that the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures was made, 300 B.C. And after the destruction of Jerusalem it was Alexandria that furnished the distinguished lights of the Church. It was in this city that the great fusion, union, and commingling of homogeneous elements took place. Here was the first and greatest library in the world. And we soon find the Fathers

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\* The communication between India and Egypt was easy.

of the Church, and none more conspicuous than Clements Alexandrinus, seeking to establish that the gospel was in accordance with the philosophy of Plato. Most ardently and effectively did he urge the entire harmony of the religion of Jesus with the Græco-Judaism of that school.

At a much earlier period than this had dualism corrupted and interwoven itself with the monkery of the Therapeutæ, and this constituted one secret of its progress, though this advance was but comparatively slow, as statistics plainly exhibit.

Had this unattractive feature alone remained after the millenarian delusion had died and been forgotten, the Church would have withered away in a century or two. The great name of Jesus even could not have made monkery and asceticism palatable after the non-fulfillment of the prophecies of John the Baptist and of John the Divine, for their predictions that "*the end was nigh at hand*" had multiplied converts by thousands.

But now a new element was introduced; Greek culture and Greek thought were skillfully interwoven with the woof of dogma, definition, and mystery. The tri-personality of Plato became a trinity of three in one and one in three, and over all, as a halo of glory, the personality of Jesus reflected a charm. The Greek asked for this individuality. Here was perfected humanity,—the gospel unfolded to him the Son of man. But ages of tradition had *rendered this insufficient*. He was told of the Son of God, who, by a *mystery*, was also God himself. Socrates had taught a Great

First Cause, who was the Creator of all things. He also spoke of law and order in the universe. This was not denied. But, it was affirmed, *this man* is Lord of lords and King of kings, and his divine presence was to be found in the promptings of their own hearts if they would but *confess his name*.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Origen—Ammonius—Celsus—The time in which the Synoptics were compiled—The Gospel according to John—Polycrates—Easter—Quartodecimo Council—Passover.

ORIGEN was the successor of Clement at Alexandria, in the eighteenth year of his age, and gave to the school all the faculties of his highly-cultivated mind. His teachings also acted as a counterpoise to the extreme tendency towards the cultivation of the intellect and the prominence of science in the domain of thought. The early impressions which he received from Ammonius, whose occupation was that of a porter of the lodge, soon returned with renewed force, and he in a great measure abandoned culture and art, and with a fiery zeal held to the Neo-Platonic school of Ammonius, and met the persecution that it involved with the persistent purpose of an Essene, who, as Josephus informs us, could look death in the face with an unfaltering gaze. He was stoned in the streets, free speech was denied him, he was driven from Alexandria and was obliged to take refuge in Palestine, and for a time a schism in the Church seemed inevitable, for he was received at Antioch, and obtained from the Bishop of Cæsarea priestly orders. A council was the consequence, and he was deprived of his office. But still the Churches of Arabia, Palestine, and Phœnicia lis-

tened to and welcomed him among them. It was now that he interpreted Matt. xix. 12 in a literal sense, and committed an act that he afterwards confessed with such dolorous lamentations.

The most celebrated of his works that remain are the fragments of his eight books "against Celsus." The charges of the latter we know but in the representations of Origen. Celsus was of the Stoic school of what was called heathen philosophy, and he asserted that the Christians taught nothing new, that their proceedings were secret, that their prophecies were misapplied and unfulfilled, that they used enchantments or magic, and, finally, that the idea of a divine man was from Plato, and that it was an absurdity. And, further, to show the tendency of the age, he boldly announced his entire unbelief in the gods of imperial Rome. Origen, in his reply, displays great erudition and skill. He admits some of the charges, and asserts that "the name IESUS and some passages of the Holy Scriptures\* were a kind of sacred spell." He also says that the "ARCANA IMPERII" was to be kept from the vulgar eye and ear, and justifies it from quotations from the school of Celsus, concluding by saying :

"I have 'this, further, to say to the Greeks who won't believe that our Saviour was born of a virgin, that the Creator of the world, if he pleases, can make every animal bring forth in some wonderful manner. What

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\* Origen says, "the word Israel translated into Greek will do nothing; but on pronouncing it in Hebrew the magical operation will take place."

absurdity is there in supposing that the all-wise God, designing to bless mankind with an extraordinary teacher, should so order matters that our blessed Saviour should not be born in the ordinary way of human generation?" Origen died A.D. 254.

As has been shown, Justin Martyr addressed his apology to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, who began his reign in the year 138 and ended it in 161. Some time during this twenty-three years that intervened, the Gospels "according" to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, as such, were not in existence. For he makes no allusion to any apostolic author but "John, who wrote the Revelation," and speaks of the work, out of which he has so abundantly cited, as "*The Memoirs of the Apostles*." During the life of Justin, then, we are also informed the first three Gospels, as we have them, were not in existence. We are informed that he died in the year 168; and though he repeatedly quotes known passages in the Synoptics, along with other passages of which we have *no account*, out of the *same book or memoirs*, he makes no mention of anything that can be construed as from John.

But in the time at which Origen wrote, the Gospels were compiled very much as we have them. He and his predecessor, Clemens Alexandrinus, are the first to mention in detail the different books of the New Testament. Clement died about the year 220.

We shall not be far from wrong in saying that Matthew and Luke were compiled about the year 170, the Acts a year later, and Mark about A.D. 175. The fourth Gospel was evidently not written, judging from

both external and internal evidence, till the beginning of the third century.

As authority, I could quote many distinguished names of the age, but I will go back to 1801, and cite a no less distinguished personage than a reverend bishop of the Church of England,—Herbert Marsh, who, in his translation to “*Michaelis’s Introduction to the New Testament*,” says, “It is a certain fact, that several readings in our common printed text are nothing more than alterations made by Origen, whose authority was so great in the Christian Church that emendations which he proposed, though, as he himself acknowledged, they were supported by the evidence of no manuscript, were very generally received.”

Now, perhaps some of my readers will turn to the pages of some reverend gentleman’s book to disprove this, and he may find Tatian cited, and J. J. Gurney places him A.D. 170. Concerning him there has been much dispute; that he was a heretic, we have already seen. It seems that Eusebius or Epiphanius never saw his book. The passage relied on to prove that he cited the fourth Gospel is this:\* “Forsaking dæmons, give up yourselves to the one God. For all things are by him, and without was not anything made.”

He\* “denied the reality of Christ’s sufferings, the salvation of Adam, and condemned the use of wine.” Victor Capaanus, in the sixth century, called his harmony *Δια Ηεντε*, of the five. Among other things which have been preserved concerning his Gospel, was

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\* Dr. Lardner, vol. ii. p. 150.

"that the child Jesus abode seven years in Egypt." Irenæus and Clement considered him a heretic.

Some writers have relied upon Athenagoras, 170, because he said\* "there are four regions, four catholic spirits, four cardinal points, and it was fit that the gospel should rest upon four pillars."

Tertullian\* speaks of "the Gospels as 'commentaries of the apostles,' and says that they were not all written by them." The spiritual nature of the fourth Gospel Justin did not allude to, and adheres to the views of the Synoptics, that the length of the ministry of Jesus was one year; and Tertullian supports the same idea. The latter speaks of the "Word," but he may have been alluding to numerous works by "heathen" authors, who used *exactly similar language*, and from whom the thought was taken. Tertullian lived, however, in the year 200.

The Synoptic Gospels, as we well know, say that the public appearance of Jesus was one year, all the writings of the early Church affirm it, as do also Clement and Origen, showing that the Gospel according to John was not in existence *in the early part of their time!*†

That eminent minister in our Society, John Jackson, asserted that the Bible must be left to "*Science*"‡ as its

\* Dr. Lardner, vol. ii. p. 277.


† Renan, in his later editions of the *Life of Jesus*, has abandoned his former position in regard to the fourth Gospel, in reference to its trustworthiness in a historical point of view.

‡ Dissertation Christ. Ministry, p. 91.

true interpreter. Since the time that this was written the *science of analysis* has been directed to an investigation of those elements and first principles which in a historical point of view are the substratum on which the Scriptures rest. And it has been demonstrated by unmistakable evidence that in the year 168 the fourth Gospel was not in existence.

In that year a general council of the Church was held, which has been already alluded to. The subject that occasioned such agitation, and which threatened to divide the East from the West, was the question as to the *time* of the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The Bishops of Asia held to the 14th day of Nisan, and one of them on that occasion said, "Moreover, I, Polycrates, who am the last of you all, according to the tradition of my relatives, some of whom I have followed. For there were seven my relative bishops, and I am the eighth: and my relatives always observed *the day when the people threw away the leaven*. I, therefore, who am sixty-five years in the Lord, am not at all alarmed at those things with which I am threatened, to intimidate me." He quotes "John who rested upon the bosom of our Lord," also Polycarp, Philip, and "the blessed Paparius, and Melito the eunuch, whose walk and conversation was altogether under the influence of the Holy Spirit, who now rests in Sardis, awaiting the episcopate from heaven when he shall rise from the dead. All these observed the fourteenth day of the Passover."

Now, the Gospel according to John *expressly states that the crucifixion was on the day of the Pass-*



over,\* and that the Supper was on the evening preceding it, and here we find Polycrates citing John against the Gospel ascribed to him, and in favor of time which the first three Gospels affirm to have been the date on which the Last Supper was eaten,—THE EVE OF THE PASSOVER,—the fourteenth day of Nisan.†

The liberal or Eclectic tendency of the Church at Rome was here most plainly exhibited, for they desired Easter Sunday observed as the day of the celebration, which, as Adelung has shown, is from the feast of the goddess Ostera (the goddess of spring). And both the German and the English words are derived from the old Saxon word *oster*, *osten*, the signification of which is *rising*,—nature having put forth again!

Had the Roman Church known of this Gospel, they would not have failed to produce it, as it accorded with the view which they *afterwards* held that Christ was the paschal lamb. This idea is peculiar to the latter part of the second and the beginning of the third century, for we first find the expression from Theophilus of Antioch about A.D. 190.

The irreconcilable differences between the Gospel under consideration and the Synoptics are many, showing that they were not *compiled from the same authorities*. In the former there are *four passovers* at Jerusalem, and the public life of Jesus seems to revolve

\* Compare Matt. xxvi. 20; Mark xiv. 2 and 12; Luke xxii. 15, with John xiii. 1; John xviii. 39, and John xix. 14.

† April 3d. According to John, it was on the previous eve.

about that city. In the latter there is but one passover, and the principal events of his ministry are in Galilee, —he visits Jerusalem but once! The anecdote in relation to the cleansing of the temple is differently related—Justin renders it as in the Synoptics. All of the different versions of this are unhistoric, and all of them grew out of a simile that Jesus no doubt used,—alluding to the temple of the heart, and the necessity of its purification; in John we see the idea of the Therapeutæ, “the whip of small cords.”

The public entrance into Jerusalem is quite differently related. In John the visit would seem prompted by information in regard to Lazarus. This miracle is related only in this account, and unquestionably had for its foundation some analogy which Jesus had used in reference to the power of God, who “*is the resurrection and the life*” of every soul, and who can in the twinkling of the eye raise the seemingly dead one in sin and trespass—even though “he stinketh”—into immortal life! So also the transforming of the water into wine, for it is an insult to our understanding, and to the purity of his character, to suppose that, after the “*men had well drunk*,” that more wine was furnished them! Not so taught this great man. But he inculcated that grand idea continually that we all have a well-grounded hope, and that in the future life a gracious God has in reserve for us the “*good wine*” of his kingdom.

Some of the incidents related would imply an intimate connection between this and the other accounts, as, for instance, feeding the multitude and walking

on the sea; and then again we will find diverse renderings of the same incident, which would seem to imply that the former was compiled at different times. The chapter in regard to the woman taken in adultery was not in the most ancient readings. But we would not like to part with it, nevertheless. It was originally found in an apocryphal gospel, and was so cited by the Fathers.

Some of the sayings that are recorded have a ring of the true metal, and no doubt had been preserved by tradition; for the Welsh ballads and the ancient Arab poems were preserved by memory alone for centuries. But we cannot, evidently, rely upon the doctrinal teachings and the obscure metaphysics that are to be found upon almost every page, they are not a just or correct reflection of the mind of Jesus. None of the Gospels have an *absolute importance* in this respect, but only a relative. And in that which is under consideration we have plainly daguerreotyped the views and feelings that characterized the beginning of the second century. A spirit of exclusiveness is to be found here frequently that is scarcely met with in the other accounts: "*I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me.*" "*They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*" Such texts—and there are many of them—savor of the monastic school of Origen, and Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, whither the former went after his persecution at Alexandria.

Again, we have naught of the millenarian views of John in the Revelation,—on the contrary, *an apology for such opinions*; but in lieu of the Jesus, who was to

the fourth Gospel we have a sort of non-probation of the early responses with the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. The book was compiled. This idea is not a great thing in the conversation with the reader.

There is a single point in living father and friend, which is not illustrated in the beautiful parable of the fig-tree. We have here a mystery difficult to understand. The aspect of the non-probation of those who were fasting and praying in his name, we have all seen before. The same is a *chief* and a *chief*.

The same point is seen in Luke, and the expression of the Kingdom of God is not here met with. We have a mystery that has mystified many thousands, and the aspect of that involving power so clear and so simple that the multitude with which he loved to converse appreciated and understood. "Why even of yourselves, ye say ye are right?"\* To the lawyer, "This is the law of the Lord."† referring to the commandments. Or to the Scribe, who asserted "there is ONE God."‡ Jesus answered, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God."

In the fourth Gospel we find but little account in the matter *original with it*, of Jesus mixing with the multitude, and instructing them publicly, as in Matthew and Luke. This Gospel, as that of Mark, is evidently written by a recluse. In the latter there are thirteen different injunctions to secrecy; in Luke, but two.

\* Luke xii. 57.

† Luke x. 28.

‡ Mark xii. 34.

This was contrary to the spirit of Jesus, and denotes the vocation of the compiler. The fourth Gospel narrates many interesting facts in regard to the opposition of his family to his ministry, John vii. 2-10. Here is exhibited unmistakable hostility, "for he went up to the feast not openly, but as it were in secret," no doubt in consequence of their threats against him. This seems historic. The teaching in the temple related in this chapter could not have been at Jerusalem, for it would not have been allowed, as the temple was not the place for preaching. It was no doubt *some tradition* that grew out of an incident which took place at an Essenian temple in Galilee.

We miss the declaration in the Synoptics of the Oneness of God, and the affirmation in all of them, there is none perfect in goodness but ONE, that is God. Instead of this doctrine, which so accords with the promptings of our hearts, we have in the fourth Gospel *two* divine beings certainly taught, and *two* others as plainly implied; this is not the faith taught by Jesus, but is from the vagaries of the school of Valentine. We have but one parable in this Gospel, that of the sheepfold, with a "porter who openeth" the door. Can there be any analogy between this simile and Ammonius the porter, whose doctrines Origen imbibed? In forming our estimate of the character of this "great father," we must remember that he held the Pastor of "St. Hermes" to have been divinely inspired, and also that the morals of that book are quite questionable.

The Gospel according to John has little of the im-

press of Jesus, except the chapter in relation to the woman taken in adultery, which is not original to it, and that ever-memorable conversation at Jacob's well with the woman of Samaria. This will live forever, having upon it the signet of the Son of man!—God is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in TRUTH. For the Father seeketh such to worship him.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

A True Harmony of the Gospels—Thomas Jefferson—Hillel—The Family of Jesus—His Mother—His Mission—Goes to Jerusalem—View of the Millennium—Prescience—The Truth as it is in Jesus—Before Pilate—The School of John taken for that of Jesus—The Clergy and the Truth—Miracles and Nature.

THE time has come for the compilation of a true harmony of the Gospels. Who will attempt it? Thomas Jefferson, in those most interesting letters on the subject of religion, in his old age, to his friend John Adams, says upon this subject, "We must dismiss the Platonists and Plotinists, the Stagyrtes and Gamalielites, the Eclectics, the Gnostics, and Scholastics, their essences and emanations, their Logos, and Æons, and Dæmons, male and female, with a long train of etc. etc., or, shall I say at once, of nonsense. We must reduce our volume to the simple evangelists, select even from them the very words of Jesus, paring off the amphibologisms into which they have led, by forgetting often, or not understanding, what has fallen from him, by giving their own misconceptions as *his dicta*, and expressing unintelligibly for others what they have not understood themselves. There will be found remaining the most sublime and benevolent code of morals which has ever been offered to man. I have performed this operation for *my own use*, by cutting

verse by verse out of a printed book, and arraying the matter which is evidently his, and which is as *easily distinguishable as diamonds* in a dunghill."\* He further says, "The doctrines which flowed from the lips of Jesus himself are within the comprehension of a child; but a thousand volumes have not explained the Platonisms engrafted on them: and for this obvious reason, that nonsense can never be explained."†

Perhaps each one had better do for himself as Jefferson did. In so doing we evidently cannot rely upon those who, on the last evening that Jesus spent upon this earth, "*strove among themselves as to who should be accounted the greatest.*"‡

A true life of Jesus cannot be compiled from this source alone. A comprehensive view must be taken of the century immediately preceding our era, as well as the one succeeding it. Not only the four Gospels, but also the Apocrypha, the fragments of history preserved by the Fathers, as well as the traditions of those whom they esteemed as heretics; especially the views of the Ebionites, who were in existence till the fourth century.

But above all, some fixed, certain, and definite apprehension of his character and teachings must be established in the mind. As the anatomist, by the examination of a single section of a vertebra, can define the species, class, and order of the animal, or the horticulturist, in passing through an orchard of a thousand

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\* Jefferson's Letters, iv. p. 223.

† Ibid., iv. p. 242.

‡ Luke xxii. 24.

kinds of different fruits, can determine from a cursory examination of bud or blossom, or, in the wintry season, by the twig alone, the proper fruit each tree will bear, just so we must form a just apprehension of the principles and doctrine that were inculcated in Galilee eighteen hundred years ago. Having thus determined the status of this great teacher, we must believe nothing, though it may be Paul, Apollos, or Cephas that speaks, that is inconsistent with the truths which we have established in our minds.

For instance, the *first three Gospels* render him as affirming the ONENESS of the Divine Mind. They all agree that in reply to some interrogatory, assigning him a position which he esteemed did not belong of right to him, he answered them and said, "There is none GOOD but ONE; that is God." It was the radiation of this central truth that awakened the response in other minds, and led them to wonder at the "gracious words of wisdom which proceeded out of his mouth." When young in years, he evinced that "the hand of the Lord was with him, and he grew in stature and in favor with God and man."

Now, true wisdom is consistent with itself. We can with propriety say that God can do nothing incongruous with his own attributes, and certainly we can affirm that Jesus could *say nothing* antagonistic with his own teachings. Hence, when he was called the carpenter's son in the first three Gospels, he never denied it, but constantly designates himself as the Son of Man.

In the first sermon\* that we read of his having

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\* Luke iv. 16.

delivered in the synagogue at Nazareth, he said, "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captive, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bound.*" This was the announcement of his mission to the people in the town in which he was brought up; and some of his last words were of the same import,—“To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.”

Though he considered himself as the recipient of the truth of God, he recognized the universality of the divine light in its relation to *all men*; for “whosoever shall do the WILL OF GOD, the same is my brother, and my sister, and my mother.”

The truths which he announced in his Sermon upon the Mount were not new truths, for but two generations before Hillel had expounded *to the Jews*, in a philosophical manner, very much the same precepts, and died esteemed as a famed doctor of divinity among them. But Jesus was the first who attempted to put them into practical operation and *illustration among the people for their elevation, disenthralment, and deliverance from the power of the priests*. Hence “the fame of him went into every country round about. . . . And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him.” The learned doctors were at first astonished, and many of them, like Nicodemus, may have come as in the night to query of him concerning the kingdom of God.

But these were no doubt exceptions, for they soon saw that they "prevailed nothing," and said to one another, "Behold, the world is going after him." And no doubt before he went up to Jerusalem his leveling doctrines had excited much wonderment. Therefore we read, that soon after his arrival at that city, "that the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders came upon him, and spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things?"

Had they heard of the parable of the prodigal son, it would have been enough to excite their suspicion and jealousy that he meant the undermining of their authority and supremacy in *spiritual things*. And Jesus knew that the pride and envy of a priest, when excited to hatred and fear, were most implacable and deadly in their nature, and cruel in their designs. And hence, as he journeyed towards the holy city, his mind was filled with the prescience of his coming fate, The Pharisees,\* who were previously sent to inquire after his doctrine, had reported him as having eaten with "unwashed hands," and as teaching the non-observance of the laws of Moses as to "the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels;" as calling the laws in their holy books mere "traditions of men," as setting them aside in regard to the observance of the Sabbath, and other ceremonials; and of crimes, too, which were punishable with the loss of life. For he had forgiven the woman *who by their law* should have been stoned to death.

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\* Mark vii.

He went up to Jerusalem with the knowledge of this report to those in high places there, and though his mind was filled with sorrow, yet he faltered not in the line of duty. He knew that his own brethren had violently opposed him in Galilee, and it seems highly probable that he had not even the countenance of his mother in setting his face against the law. His family were all against him, when he said, Ye make "the word of God of none effect through your traditions." And he could expect naught else but persecution, and probably death itself. Notwithstanding this, we read, "*he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.*"

When in that city, though circumspect in his replies to those who sought to involve him with the Romans in reference to the tribute to Cæsar, he was earnest and bold in his utterances. If the rendering in Matthew\* be correct, his language was terrible in its invective, and bitter in its sarcasm, against the hypocrisy of the ruling class who "love the uppermost rooms at the feast, and the chief seats in the synagogues." The language in this chapter is sufficient to account for his death; but it is not at all probable that he used such violent expressions. The Essenian prejudice of the narrator against the Pharisees will account for much of it. Jesus had said enough outside of the city to merit death. For it was a time of blind devotion to the law and the usages prescribed by Moses. The presence of the Romans in their midst was a perpetual source of aggravation. It was a day of great zeal and

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\* Matt. xxiii.

fanaticism among the people, as Josephus shows, for the rituals and ceremonies of Moses, for the written as well as the unwritten law.

Under the protection of Herod the Great, but a generation before, the humane and peaceful Hillel, surnamed the Elder, who was the grandfather of Gamaliel, the preceptor of Paul, had sought to disseminate generous and charitable sentiments among the Jews. It was he who said, when applied to by a Greek for instruction as to the Mosaic polity, "Do not unto others what you would not like others to do to you." His school sought to incorporate this maxim of ethics into the law and to make it an ingredient even of worship; but for the causes just stated the rival school of the austere Shammay held undisputed sway at the time of the arrival of Jesus at Jerusalem.

Josephus states that at this period the Romans were introducing Cæsar's effigies into the city, and "were endeavoring to abolish the Jewish laws." The times were eminently unpropitious for one born without the pale of Judea to attempt what the learned Hillel had failed in accomplishing; and this a stranger, too, from Galilee, who had dared to condemn the sacrificial offerings at the temple, for the Jews held that the shedding of blood was necessary for the remission of sins.

The accusation before Pilate was not strange, then: "We found this fellow perverting the nation; he stirreth up the people, beginning from Galilee to this place." Of course they alleged a false reason to Pilate. But the real cause of his arrest and subsequent punishment by a cruel death was unquestionably his denial

of the ceremonies and rituals of the law of Moses and the authority of the Old Testament. This can only explain his persecution by his brethren in Galilee and his martyrdom on Calvary's Mount.

Some writers argue that because his disciples and those who advocated his name held to the delusion of a speedy millennium, he was therefore in some degree implicated in this fallacy. If this reasoning be just, he might be made answerable also for other absurdities of theirs as well as this, which they all seemed to have held.

The followers of Jesus were most of them of the school of John, and he was undoubtedly a believer, and probably originated\* the idea of, a millennium, and had occasioned great commotion by its advocacy in the "wilderness of Judea." His kingdom of heaven was an outward kingdom. But that which Jesus taught was totally different from this, and in the teachings, which are evidently *his*, we see displayed a philosophy not of the narrow schools of John the Baptist and John the Divine. No idea of the elect few is inculcated, but of a genial Providence, "who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." The kingdom that he taught was that the Father's "will might be done in earth as it is in heaven." It was no doubt in rebuke of this delusion that Jesus instanced those beau-

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\* Or more probably imbibed the idea from the same source from which much of the Old Testament originated, from India. Very many of the laws of Moses are identical with the laws of Manou; also the creation and the deluge.

tiful parables in regard to the heavenly kingdom, for the followers of John were concerning themselves much as to *when* the time would come which their Master had predicted.

It was in reply to a question to some of this school that he said, "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there! *for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.* And when they say unto you, See here! or See there! go not after them. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." If these words be his, he certainly did not believe in the doctrine of the outward millennium, for his teachings were consistent with himself and with his philosophy. *They must be words of his*, because they are antagonistic to the school of John, and are evidently above the comprehension of his own disciples. The instances of this misconception are very many. He was continually rebuking them for their outward ideas, and the writers of the Gospels admit "they understood none of these things, and that this saying was hid from them; neither knew they the things that were spoken." The monkery and asceticism which have disfigured the religion taught in the name of Jesus were also from the school of John.

Again, it has been alleged that the reason given for parabolic illustration implies deceit. Now, if we examine the text Matt. xiii. 13 and compare with the next verse, the difficulty is explained, that the sentiment is not that of Jesus, for it is rendered that text was given for the *purpose* of "fulfilling the prophecy of Esaias, which sayeth, By hearing ye shall hear and

not understand, and seeing ye shall see and not perceive." This thought is also in direct antagonism to many of the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, in which men are enjoined "to let their light shine before men—to put it on a candlestick that it may give light unto all that are in the house;" that "thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark."

The doctrine and *the life* of Jesus were utterly antagonistic to this sentiment, which, as Dr. Mosheim says, the Pythagoreans and Platonists held as a principle that it was not only lawful but also eminently proper and right to deceive for the purpose of promoting truth. He says "that it was an almost universally adopted maxim that it was an act of virtue to deceive and lie, when by such means the interests of the Church might be promoted."

Not only by precept but also by example—not only by his life but also by his death—did Jesus protest against this doctrine, which it is evident that he held in especial detestation. So much was this the case, that in the Gospels writers have him compared "as a great light to them that sat in darkness;" as a "day-spring from on high, which, through the tender mercy of our God, hath visited us;" as "the light shining in darkness, which the darkness comprehended not." And Jesus was continually denouncing hypocrisy, which in *Hebrew* means *covering up or concealing*. "*Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees; for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever*

*ye have heard spoken in darkness shall be heard in light, and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops. And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body."*

It has also been questioned by other writers whether Jesus anticipated the dissemination of his teachings beyond the confines of Judea. Let this be as it may, he certainly was the first to appreciate the principles of a universal faith for the whole family of man. And the advocacy of this faith was not a spontaneous outburst or ebullition of feeling on his part, for he had arrived at mature years before he ventured on the stage of action as a public teacher. As he wrought beside his bench in the shop of a carpenter, or as he wandered forth beneath the blue sky of Galilee, inspiring thoughts had quickened and filled his great soul to overflowing. As he wrought with his hands, he pondered with his mind, and, in the fullness and completeness of the preparation, the time at last arrived for him to announce to others what God had done for him; or, as the account says, he "was moved by compassion towards them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things."

From the first of his ministry he endeavored to simplify religion, and drew many of his illustrations from the beautiful and simple in nature. It was the "lilies" of the valley and "the grass of the field" that were greater than Solomon in all his glory. There is no question that he saw through those false views of religion which recognized evil in the innocent sensibili-

ties of the heart, and represented the character of the divine mind as inharmonious with his works.

He did not search the Old Testament for exemplifications of his theme. It was the smallest of all seeds, the largest of all trees, the greatest of all herbs ; the tares of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish in the sea ; the "*Old*" and the "*New*."\* The stale amplifications of the laws of Moses, and the constant reference to what the prophets of the past had said in relation thereto, had no doubt filled his mind with disgust with the teachings in the synagogues of the people. No sermon of his did he begin by inculcating an undue reverence for the dead past ; *it was ever the living present*. In one of the most effective of them, he "called a little child to him and set him in the midst of them," illustrating simple faith by childlike obedience.

Jesus thoroughly comprehended that religion embraced the whole sphere of truth. I well know that much is taught in the New Testament that would imply the contrary ; but we must not disfigure the grandeur of his genius with the littleness of some of those who taught in his name. The comparison between him and even his immediate followers is, indeed, great in every respect. Paul seems to have appreciated him in some things ; but the difference between them is as the highest and lowest of the Alleghanies ! We have seen that his biographers drew their materials mostly from tradition, and that necessarily their

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\* This term is used in reference to John ; compare Luke v. 33 with 36.

writings are full of mistakes and misconceptions, so that the truth is discernible often but as a gleam of light, and as the lightning's play amid the clouds of summer.


Till this comes to be understood, we must expect the present divorced relations to continue between the religion taught in the name of Jesus and the science and literature of the age. For men of the highest genius turn in disgust, as Jesus did, from the cant and affected piety of the day. This separation will continue, and religion will remain in its present low and depressed condition, and will be considered a theme by the laity to be avoided. And thus literature and science are robbed of half their charms. For religion is confounded with mockery, subtlety, and superstition, with the jargon of clashing polemics, that but tend to emasculate the mind. Men of true culture can see nothing in it to adorn and enrich their thoughts. The methods by which all else is determined, *in this domain must stay its hand*. Science is told, take "the shoes from off thy feet, for the ground on which thou standest is holy ground."

This is exemplified in the literature of the day, for who reads a book to which the author's D.D. is attached? The clergy so understand it, and are subscribing other designations, M.A. for instance. This is the case of the Rev. F. D. Maurice's many works. And they are quite readable, especially his lectures on the "Religions of the World," notwithstanding the artifice used in concealing his profession.

The time will come when the clergy will thank such

minds as Agassiz, who in the domain of science are endeavoring to uplift religion and infuse into it the vivifying blood of God's eternal truths as exemplified by his works. Though they are now denouncing such as he as infidels and unbelievers, yet they may, some of them at least, live to see the day when they will at least not condemn those who with surgeon's skill have laid bare the gangrene and ulcerous sore that has been gnawing and corroding at the heart of Christianity for for many hundreds of years.

The degradation of religion into a technical study is the cause of much hypocrisy and servitude on the part of its votaries, and has kept them from that robustness of thought which liberal and diversified research would have engendered. This has done infinite mischief to them. It, however, is but a small part of the injury inflicted, for their influence has acted and reacted till both the laity and clergy are bonds. The one *must* believe and the other *must* preach a faith that is even unfavorable to true devotion, for it divides and distracts the soul from the oneness of the divine mind. Instead of offering ONE object to fix the thought upon, ONE Infinite Father and only First Cause, ONE Being of beings, the mind is left to wander about, and is degraded and depressed by mysteries and conjectures which separate him into the Trinity of popular theology. Rival claims are set up in the heart. Jesus of Nazareth is made an object of worship and adoration. And at Rome the Virgin Mary is by human transport and tenderness exalted into a like position. This may be favorable to sentiment and feeling, but it



certainly is not satisfactory to reason, and is most evidently contrary to the simple theism of Jesus.

There is but one cure for this false philosophy, and that is to tell the simple truth,—the truth of science, the truth of religion, the truth of history; in a word, the truth as it is in Jesus.

Already great names are being attracted to this grand theme. Too long has it been left to a particular vocation alone, which as a cathedral emits only a dim religious light, and speaks but in sepulchral tones. But there are signs of a more auspicious day. A new era of thought and sentiment is awakening throughout the world. More sublime conceptions of God is science unfolding to the view, evincing, as it does, his unfathomable love in placing man in the very acme of created things, all creatures ministering to his enjoyment, comfort, and pleasure.

Science proves that God is good, and that his laws are so arranged that man can arrive only at the full fruition of true happiness by regarding him alone as the central sun of his spiritual system, whose rays are shed on all his rational creatures. A true knowledge of God thus beams upon the soul from this source. And the dark picture which a false religion has engendered is being wafted away by the sunlight of truth. And because of the claims of those who esteem themselves the especial champions of the religion of Jesus, and because of the absurdities that they teach in his name, many men of powerful understanding, without a sufficient examination, have turned from it with entire skepticism.

But in this department of investigation, too, men of culture, of genius, and of deep spiritual discernment are analyzing and scrutinizing, and when they shall have separated the inspiration of Jesus from the grossness of the schools which were cotemporaneous with him, his conception of the divine mind will be found to be in harmony with the truths which science has evolved.

In this field of investigation, however, synthesis must not be mistaken for analysis, legend for history, narrative for fact, or illustrations rendered entirely allegorical as problems intended to be wrought out, applied, and understood in the progress through life by the spiritual perceptions of the soul, but which in the course of time have been recorded historically by the gross and sensual-minded men who became the historians of Jesus.

To illustrate, we find on two different occasions in Matthew, a sign was requested to be wrought out before the inquirers that they might see for themselves. Jesus replied by affirming the unchangeable laws of the Creator, "and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites! ye can discern the face of the sky; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times." He told them that it was a wicked and adulterous generation that seeketh after a sign, "*And there shall be no sign given unto it.*"

The Creator of the universe does not suspend his laws to prove himself. Man needs no miracles to be-

lieve in him. He need only hearken in silence to the divine promptings within him, and his faith becomes a living reality.

To Jesus this faith was a divine reality. What need, then, of miracles ?

"The sun that rises, the seas that flow,  
The beautiful heavens, the flowers that blow,  
The truth that liveth, the thoughts that go,  
The voice of Divinity answers, No !"

## CHAPTER XIX.

**The Doctrine of Jesus—The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man reflected in the Science of Ethnology—Whittier.**

FROM beside a carpenter's bench in Galilee was conceived the sublime idea,—the Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man. We search in vain in the philosophy of Plato for this thought,—the keynote of his system came from Egypt, which was selfishness personified. Egyptian darkness dates its exclusiveness to the priestly caste of India.

Had the thought of Jesus—HUMANITY ! been taught in its fullness, the fact of to-day would not be exemplified that six-sevenths of the human race reject his name.

This humiliating spectacle is not by reason of any defect in his system, as we have seen ; but as Rammo-hun Roy, three-fourths of a century since, was denounced as a heathen man because he did not subscribe to the formalities of method and precision, so in this year 1871 do we see such a man as Agassiz thus proscribed because of his attempt to lift religion above the clouds that envelop it.

So also in the comparatively new sciences of phonology and ethnology, for they are inseparably connected,—because their demonstrations do not point to

the Hebrew as the foundation of all speech, to Babel as the explanation of its diversity, and to the day of Pentecost as the era of comparative philology, this sphere of new thought is looked upon by the theologian with aversion and suspicion, though it teaches by the most irrefragable proofs, the cardinal doctrine of Jesus, erasing from the vocabulary of humanity the word "heathen," and substituting in lieu thereof, in letters of living light, the declaration, "all ye are brethren."

The missing key to the science of language is at last the property of the public, through the labors of such men as Sir William Jones, Leibnitz, Hervas, Bopp, and Müller. As long since as the middle of the sixteenth century it was probably known to the Jesuits at Rome, that the Germanic, Persian, Greek, and Latin languages were derived from the Sanskrit. In the year 1606, Roberto de Nobili disguised himself as a Brahmin, and thus by stealth acquired a knowledge of the sacred idiom of the Hindoo. This was, in a measure, concealed till the formation of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, 1784, when the era of Sanskrit literature first dawned upon the philologists of Europe. In regard to its reception, I will quote from Müller in his recent work on the "Science of Language :"

"People were completely taken by surprise, theologians shook their heads, classical scholars looked skeptical, philosophers indulged in the wildest conjectures in order to escape from the only possible conclusion which could be drawn from the facts before them, but which threatened to upset their little systems of the history of the world. Lord Monboddo had just finished

his great work, in which he derives all mankind from a couple of apes, and all the dialects of the world from a language originally framed by some Egyptian gods, when the discovery of Sanskrit came on him like a thunderbolt." His theories vanished, and in 1792 he writes to his friend Wilkins:

"There is a language still existing, and preserved among the Brahmins of India, which is a richer and in every respect a finer language than even the Greek of Homer. In my third volume of *Ancient Metaphysics* I shall be able clearly to prove that the Greek is derived from Sanskrit, which was the ancient language of Egypt."

Among the first to doubt that the Hebrew was the source of all human expression was Leibnitz, the great cotemporary of Newton. "There is," he said, "as much reason for supposing Hebrew to have been the primitive language of mankind as there is for adopting the view of Goropius, who published a work in Antwerp in 1580, to prove that Dutch was the language spoken in Paradise."

Sanskrit ceased to be a spoken language among the people of India long before our era. With the emigration from that country, which was the cradle of humanity, the idioms of this tongue went among not only the nations of Europe, but also to those of Eastern and Western Asia. At what date Buddhism was introduced from India into China cannot now be determined, but from the annals of the empire we find that it became a third state-religion before A.D. 80. The name of Buddha—Fo-t'o and Fo—is pure

Sanskrit, as is also considerable of the Chinese language.

The affinity between Sanskrit and the languages of Western Asia and Europe is unmistakable. From the structure of these philologists had long suspected a language behind them. In Sanskrit the key to the puzzle was discovered, and comparative grammar has established its solution. By this means a state of considerable civilization is shown to have been the condition of our Aryan progenitors ere they left the common home.

*Ārya* is a Sanskrit word: from it comes agriculture. It signifies good and noble family. In the old hymns of the Vedas it is frequently met with, and as these ancient records come to be collated and better understood more light will still dawn upon the science of philology.

By a limited attention to the rudiments, comparative grammar clearly explains how "everything is true, natural, significant, if we enter with a reverent spirit into the meaning of ancient art and ancient language. Everything becomes false, miraculous, and unmeaning if we interpret the deep and mighty words of the seers of old in the shallow and feeble sense of modern chroniclers."\*

Müller has most aptly illustrated this in some of the myths of the Catholic Church. Bonaventura was asked from whence he drew the inspiring thoughts for his many works: he pointed to a crucifix suspended on

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\* Müller.

the wall,—his language was interpreted literally, and this saint is held to have possessed a talking crucifix.

Some ancient worthy, fighting valiantly against the temptations of life, is transformed into St. George assailing a dragon, or St. Patrick exterminating reptiles and serpents from the land of Erin, is made miraculous from the fact of some earnest missionary having used some symbol or type in reference to idolatry and superstition.

The science of language and *its* history becomes a history of religion. Through the forms that envelop heathen mythology in the poems of Homer even, we see that religious instinct which is the common heritage of humanity.

"Zeus," Müller says, "is the most sacred name in Greek mythology, and is the same as *D-y-u* in Sanskrit, *Jovis* or *Ju* in *Jupiter* in Latin, *Tiw* in Anglo-Saxon, preserved in *Tiwsdæg*, *Tuesday*, the day of the Eddie God *Tyn*; *Zio* in old High-German."

This word was framed, he argues, but once; and that before the common home was left by primeval races who emigrated at different times to populate the different countries of Asia and Europe. Comparative grammar and comparative mythology most clearly demonstrate that the *time was* in which mankind universally, even after they had left the common pasture-ground in India, recognized in their minds and gave the obeisance of their thoughts and the reverence of their intellects to one sole and Supreme Being, who is the only Saviour and Redeemer of men! The inference of all history renders it very clear that the divis-

ibility of the Supreme into correlative parts has been the work of priestcraft and kingcraft in different ages of the world.

But before this period, when men's spiritual perceptions were thus gradually darkened, weakened, and obscured by priestcraft and superstition; when the written records of the sages of the olden time were also perverted from their original meaning and intent; thus o'er the ages transmitting errors not trifling and false conceptions not a few, yet anterior to this epoch among all nations and peoples, there was a time when the Creator of the Universe communed with the soul of man. But, as our own revered poet Whittier says,—

“Why mourn above some hopeless flaw  
In the stone tables of the law,  
When Scripture every day afresh  
Is traced on tablets of the flesh?  
By inward sense, by outward signs,  
God's presence still the heart divines;  
Through deepest joys of Him we learn,  
In sorest grief to Him we turn.  
And reason stoops its pride to share  
The child-like instinct of a prayer.”

## CHAPTER XX.

The Parsees—Zoroaster—The Avesta—Müller—Theodore Parker.

THE two great sects of the East have been noticed to some extent, but that smaller though perhaps more interesting than either—the Parsees of India—has not been alluded to; and yet for more than a century it has attracted the attention of the missionary and scholars as having great relative importance in the religious history of mankind.

Had the Greek failed to have resisted the Persian at Marathon, the religion of Zoroaster *might* have been the faith of Europe at this present day; but now it is confined to a small sect in the communities in and about Bombay in Western India.

Ancient Greek writers state that Zoroaster lived six thousand years before Plato. The sacred writings of this sect were translated into Greek at the time when the Septuagint was so rendered; but as was the custom of both Christians and Mohammedans to destroy all sacred literature but their own, the Zend Avesta but met with the common fate; and when the Persian empire was finally destroyed, the Scriptures of Zoroaster were supposed to have been lost; but in 1755 it was discovered that the remnant of this ancient people,

who had taken refuge in India, had carried with them some of the books containing the laws which Zoroaster conceived had been transmitted to him from the Highest. They have been examined by the most eminent scholars of Europe, and have been pronounced authentic. The most curious fact of all was that the priests were unable to read their own ancient writings. Their interpretation is due to the labors and researches of Rask, Burnouf, Spiegel, and Haug of Germany, and we are now able to interpret and read what remains of the ancient language of that great power that once absorbed the Assyrian and Babylonian empires through the indefatigable efforts of these minds.

Müller says that "it was as great an achievement as the deciphering of the cuneiform edicts of Darius." Our indebtedness to the scholarship of Germany in this and in many other particulars is great indeed !

Among the Parsees is much wealth, intelligence, and moral worth ; and to call them fire-worshippers would convey an insult to their feelings. Some time since, in order to enable their people the better to resist the efforts that were made to proselyte them, they published a kind of catechism, from which the following are a few extracts :

"Q. Whom do we, of the Zarthostic community believe in ?

"A. We believe in only one God, and do not believe in any beside him.

"Q. Who is that one God ?

"A. The God who created the heavens, the earth, the angels, the stars, the moon, the fire, the water, or

all the four elements, and all things of the two worlds ; that God we believe in. Him we worship, him we invoke, him we adore."

The following exhibits certainly *more charity if not more intelligence* than much of what we see in this land of light :

"Q. Was Gayomars the first man ?

"A. According to our religion he was so ; but the wise men of our community, of the Chinese, the Hindoos, and several other nations dispute the assertion, and say that there was human population on the earth before Gayomars."

There are several paragraphs in the catechism, which is quite lengthy, that are very suggestive. They are directed against the efforts of Christian missionaries,—

"Some deceivers," the Catechism says, "with the view of acquiring exaltation in this world, have set themselves up as prophets, and, going among the laboring and ignorant people, have persuaded them that '*if you commit sin, I shall save you, I shall save you,*' and thus deceive them ; but the wise among the people know the deceit."

"If any one commit sin," they say, "under the belief that he shall be saved by somebody, both the deceiver as well as the deceived shall be damned to the days of Rastâ Khez. . . . There is no Saviour. In the other world you shall receive the return according to your actions. Your Saviour is your deeds and God himself. He is the pardoner and the giver. If you repent your sins and reform, and if the Great Judge

consider you worthy of pardon, or would be merciful to you, *he alone can and will save you.*"

Professor Spiegel has pointed out the connection and similarity between Genesis and the Avesta, and in many respects the coincidences are remarkable. In the latter the world is created in *six periods*, the sum of which form one year, and the creation culminates in the creation of man. The temptation and the fall in both accounts agree, and the learned professor also claims that there is not only a similarity between the garden of Eden and the paradise of the Zoroastrians, but also that Dr. Windischmann has shown that a parallel exists between the trees of the gardens in both accounts.

Professor Müller calls attention to the similarity of the cherubim in the Veda and Avesta, who guard the way to the tree of life. Dr. Spiegel believes the two accounts point to a very early intercourse between the Aryan and Semitic races. Müller says if this be proven, it will do more to establish the historical importance of the Old Testament than all mere miraculous theories.

Many learned theologians, however, are of the opinion, and De Wette is among the number, that Deuteronomy was written about the time of Josiah to explain the discovery of the Pentateuch in the temple.\* This learned divine also points out that the book of Joshua (x. 13) quotes the book of Jasher, which was written as late as the time of David.†

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\* 2 Chronicles xxxiv. 14.

† 2 Samuel i. 18.

The researches and inquiries of learned and devoted men in the Orient are calculated, momentarily *at least*, to turn our thoughts to sacred things and from the hurry and worry of life, and to teach us charity towards the belief of our neighbors. Professor Müller says,—

“We shall learn that there is hardly one religion which does not contain some truth,—some important truth,—truth sufficient to enable those who seek the Lord and feel after him to find him in their hour of need.”

The following extracts are from the Veda (Rev. ix. 113, 7):

“Where there is eternal light in the world where the sun is placed, in that immortal, imperishable world place me, O Soma!”

“Where life is free in the third heaven of heavens, where the worlds are radiant, there make me immortal.”

“Where there is happiness and delight, where joy and pleasure reside, where the desire of our desires are attained, there make me immortal.”

In the Veda no trace of *metempsychosis* is found; that was a later doctrine; and the belief of personal immortality is constantly held in view. In the Hebrew Scriptures, Bishop Warburton and others have expressed their wonder at the absence of this doctrine. With these ancients length of days seemed the great desideratum; and in the Acts xxiii. 8 the Sadducees denied the resurrection, “neither angel nor spirit,” in the presence of the High Priest.

In the Veda we find the same primitive simplicity in many things, as in the Old Testament, and if we

object that the views of the former are not very exalted, certainly Jacob's idea of the Highest is not very estimable. He makes mere *temporalities a condition* on which he will select Jehovah to be his God (Gen. xxviii. 20, 21).

Professor Müller is of the opinion that much of the seeming polytheism among the Aryan races can be explained by a proper understanding of their idioms and peculiarities of language. What was intended only as a metaphor and simile has been rendered in a literal sense; for instance, the Parsees are called fire-worshippers; but when we come to inquire, fire is *only a language to them*. In prayer they turn to fire or to some luminous object. The Hebrew word עָקָה, to advance, to go forward as fire, is from the same root as prayer. See Lev. vi. 13. The fire upon the altar, "it shall never go out."

We may also learn charity towards the Hindoo when we turn to the writings of the Jews, which some of us consider so superior; and if we examine them with care, although translators have endeavored to disguise the fact, yet *many traces* of polytheism are not wanting. In Genesis the word Elohim is frequently met with, and Bauer is of the opinion that *Jehovah Elohim*, translated the Lord God in our version, were at one time worshiped as equal gods; and we must also remember that Laban pursued Jacob for having "*stolen his gods*." Gen. xxxi. 31-34. Joshua xxiv. 2 confesses that the father of Abraham and Nachor "served other gods."

If we compare the conceptions of the divine mind

which Isaiah formed, or the unique deity of Job, we will see a marked difference between the capricious, partial, unstable, and revengeful Jehovah of Exodus and Numbers, and we will be forced to the conclusion that the idea of one God among the Hebrews was due *to the faithfulness of individual minds* at different eras of their history.

Professor Müller says "the Veda is the oldest book we have to study for the first beginnings of language, and of all that is embodied in our language," and it is eminently satisfactory to know that the earliest conception of the Deity was the Oneness of his nature and the nearness of the connection between him and his creature man.

The analogy between the sacred books of the Buddhists and of Zoroaster with the Vedas have been clearly established; the latter, as the former, was a scion from the primitive stem, and that Zoroaster evidently strove after the attainment of a more spiritual faith and a more enlightened view of religion than the corruptions of the original doctrines presented even in his time is very clear. His teachings also became so debased in the process of time by the priests as to render the religion of Mohammed a welcome reformation in its stead.

Thus the religious history of mankind clearly evinces that God, in the different ages of the world, has, in a pre-eminent manner, endowed certain minds with extraordinary spiritual perceptions of himself, and that he has gifted these with exalted intellectual, moral, and spiritual powers of mind and soul; that he has touched

them as with a live spark from off his holy altar, so that, like Jesus of Nazareth, by *faithfulness* and *watchfulness*, they become, to use an Oriental metaphor, "God manifested in the flesh." But this inspiring wisdom is not limited to any people or nation, to any sect or to any order in any sect,—

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body nature is and God the soul."

As Theodore Parker says, "This inspiration is limited to no age or nation; it is wide as the world and common as God. It is not given to a few men, in the infancy of mankind, to monopolize inspiration and bar God out of the soul. You and I are not born in the dotage and decay of the world. Wherever a heart beats strong with love, where Faith and Reason utter their oracles, there also is God, as formerly in the hearts of seers and prophets. This inspiration is not given to the learned alone, not alone to the great and wise, but to every faithful child of God. Certain as the open eye drinks in the light do the pure in heart see God, and he that lives truly feels him as a presence not to be put by."

"To him no high, no low, no great, no small;  
He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all."

Many minds are not satisfied with this view; evangelical Christianity must have its creed, its dogma. "*They cannot trust God unless they have his bond in black and white, given under oath and attested by witnesses,*" thus perverting the Bible into the word of God, when it is simply a *record* which contains many

precious evidences of true wisdom, which have been preserved from the ravages of past ages, and which *illustrate* that "every word of God is pure, and that he is a shield to them that put their trust in him."

The Scriptures are not a history of God's dealings with his creature man, *but a record of man's conception* of his Creator, because of Isaac's view of the divine mind in Genesis, or of Joshua's that "the sun stood still and the moon stayed until the people avenged themselves upon their enemies;" or that the sun upon the dial of Ahaz went backward ten degrees as a sign that Hezekiah's life would be preserved. It does not follow that creative wisdom dealt out different measure in past ages than at the present hour; *it only establishes man's finite nature*. God is infinite, unchangeable, eternal; in him "there is no variableness or shadow of turning."

The various Scriptures of humanity show that the different founders, so to speak, of the many faiths of the world were minds of a high order, overflowing with noble aspirations, and full of deep yearning after God. Augustine recognized this when he said, "The Christian Religion really was known to the ancients, nor was it wanting at any time since the beginning of the human race. . . . It had previously existed, but began to be called Christian in this our day. It was not wanting in former times, but of latter time received this name." The term Christianity was not known to Jesus or Paul,—it was the Kingdom of God or the Gospel of God that they proclaimed. Enlightened minds in India perceive that more good can be

attained by abandoning the former, and adhering to the latter terms.

That distinguished man William Penn, in his works, quoted largely from the ancient Philosophers and Poets to prove the universality of the Kingdom of God among all people and all nations; and Paul, in addressing the Athenians on Mars' Hill, instanced their Poets as having said, "We are also His offspring."

If we deny that God has revealed himself to all mankind, *our creed is little better than open atheism*, for we deny the original gift of his free grace to the human soul.

But the reverent and enlightened mind who receives Him in the way of His coming can read the ancient conceptions of mankind, whether in the Scriptures of the Jews, the Christians, or the Vedas, the Avesta, the writings of Seneca or Plato, or on the monuments of Egypt or Babylon, with a grateful interest that they have been preserved from the tooth of time. He will not, however, build his faith upon these, for then *his faith becomes as the faith of others, it becomes a Superstition, which in the end will but blind his spiritual vision and blunt the perceptions of his soul*. As in a recent address, a Hindoo convert said, "I go to India to preach a universal faith; I shall not tell the people there our Scriptures are all right and yours are all a delusion and folly, but I shall appeal to the beautiful and true in both to demonstrate the universality of God's love."

This is the frame of mind in which man should

approach his brother, not to attempt in the spirit of presumptuous folly and absurd cant to teach him religious truth, but to seek to direct his mind to that Perpetual and Perennial stream of Divine Wisdom and Love which at first, though it may be small in its ebb and flow, will, if allowed to meander on, become as a river, making glad the whole heritage of God.

And we will be willing to apply the same rule of common sense and just criticism to the Writings which we have received from our Fathers that we apply to the Scriptures of the Hindoo, or the Wisdom of Confucius. The golden rule will be ours,—we will mete out unto others that which we would have them to measure out unto us.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## CONCLUSION.

THE foregoing essay was intended to be what it purports, only as an Index to other minds that they may be led to assist in winnowing the golden grains of truth from the chaff of error and superstition. It was written under a sense of duty; and the writer hopes that nothing has been said that may awaken a single painful thought in any mind. For he has been profoundly impressed for many years that the thought of Jesus has been perverted by designing men to build up a huge theological system which is detrimental to the cause of virtue. The dogma of the atonement, for instance, is certainly a consoling and comforting doctrine to those who live lives of sinful indulgence.

The idea is that *belief in this plan is the great essential to salvation!* Now, no man has seen God, nor can any one conceive of him by any external significance whatever. Not the Scriptures or science can teach this belief. It is only after it is *realized within us* that outward objects can illustrate him to the mind. As Dr. Arnold says, "Faith without reason is not properly faith, but mere power-worship; and power-worship may be devil-worship, for it is reason


which entertains the idea of God, *an idea essentially made up of truth and goodness no less than power.*"

This was the great thought of Jesus ; and yet to-day how much of that which is taught in his name is but mere power-worship ! The truthful mind, therefore, has no other alternative but to accept the language of Dr. Arnold, and "*to pronounce it not to be God's voice ; for no sign of power, in confirmation of it, can alone prove it to be from God !*"

Dogma cannot establish the immortality of our nature to the satisfaction of a single mind. It is the soul that speaks, and the reason which listens to the knowledge which God himself conveys. *Providence has granted to all men this voice.* The avenues or channels through which divine information flows to the soul can be closed or obstructed by sin or superstition ; and spiritual darkness thus intervenes. The only means by which the obstruction *can be removed is by removing the cause.*

Popular Christianity holds up the idea of belief or dogma as the constituent or first principle in religion ; hence the degraded condition of the Christian world, and hence the assertion that all communication from God is confined to a book written many hundreds of years ago.

I have in part, but in part only, attempted to show how those who have written in the name of Jesus have exalted dogma-worship over and above charity, purity, piety ; forgiveness of injuries, and enemies, which *we feel to be the pure precepts of Jesus.* In the fourth Gospel belief in him as the Word, the Messiah, the



Son of God, is held as the one needful thing. It is not so much the precept or message as the messenger. And much is taught that plainly shows that the writer was so imbued with the spirit of controversial disquisition that there was but little place in his mind for the enlarged, enlightened, and sublime philosophy of Jesus. Jefferson truly says, a child can distinguish between the one and the other,—as compare the following:

John iii. 36.—He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Luke ix. 54-56.—And when James and John saw this (that the Samaritans would not receive Jesus), they said, Lord, wilt thou not command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did. But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, etc.

Take the text cited from John in conjunction with such others as Mark xvi. 16,\* and consider the savage passions that such a narrow creed has unchained; consider Torquemada's bloody reign, and how the sign-manual was obtained from the gentle and lovely Isabella that consigned so many thousands to torture and death in the cells of the Inquisition. It is estimated that in Spain alone 31,912 persons drew their last breath amidst the flames that encircled them.

History ever repeats itself. Evangelical Christianity is to-day seeking to engraft upon the Constitution of Washington, Jefferson, and Madison its narrow, unphilosophical, untenable, and uncharitable creed. To correct this tendency of the Church, let enlightened views be disseminated in men's minds; and the time

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\* In Jerome's day, Mark ended chapter xvi. 8.

may come, in the providence of God, when all can adopt the language of the poet-laureate of England,—

“Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.”

Will this lead us to undervalue the writings of the olden time? Not so! The conceptions that ancient people have formed of the divine mind, and his dealings with his creature man, will become dearer and more valuable to us, because we appreciate them in the light of reason and of truth. We are no longer slaves, but freemen; and

“Jove fixed it certain that whatever day  
Makes man a slave takes half his worth away.”

Our vision is no longer bewildered and eclipsed with clouds that darken and obscure, for we behold the glory of God's sunshine in all the radiant brightness and splendor of TRUTH!

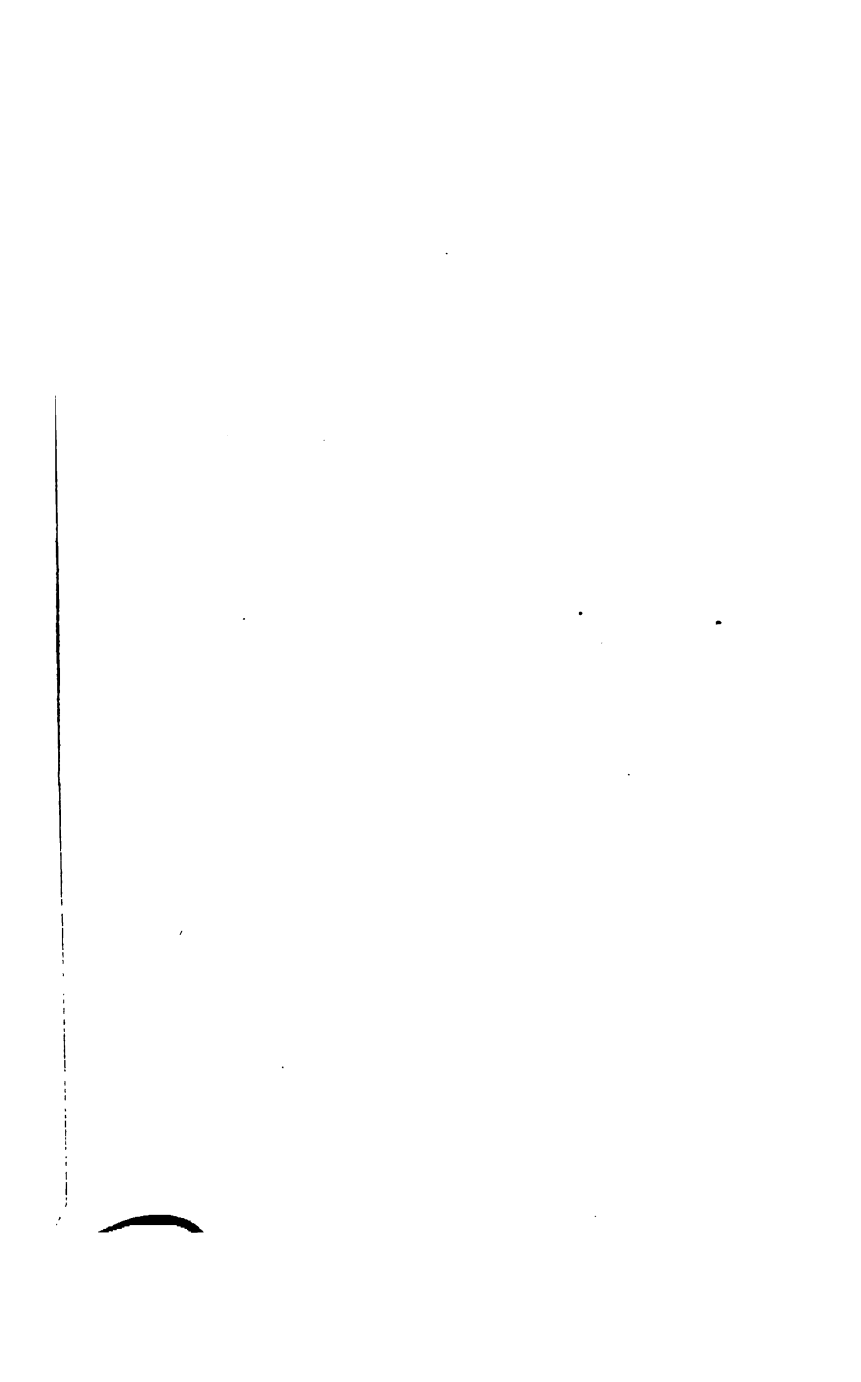
















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